LAUGHING MATTERS



Kamla Bhasin and Bindia Thapar

LAUGHING MATTERS



Kamla Bhasin and Bindia Thapar

Laughing Matters

© Kamla Bhasin and Bindia Thapar

First Published : March 2004
Third Reprint : March 2013

Published by
Jagori
B-114, Shivalik Malviya Nagar
New Delhi - 110 017
Telephone : 2669 1219, 2669 1220
Fax : 2669 1221

Printed by
Systems Vision
A-199, Okhla-I, New Delhi-110020

For limited circulation only

A Word Before.....

No, it is not true at all that feminists have no sense of humour. Would we have survived in this patriarchal and terribly anti-feminist world without humour? Actually, we even laugh at ourselves, and not only when we have no one else to laugh at.

Actually, I don't think any other movement has produced so much laughing matter, for that matter so much poetry, songs, music, creative writing, theatre For us laughing, loving, living go together.

Emma Goldman, Lithunian born U.S. anarchist said about the Russian revolution,"If I can't dance, I don't want to be part of your revolution." Many of us in the women's movement have been saying, "If there is no laughter in the women's movement let us create it." To be counted out of our own movement was not a choice for us.

And of course, like all political humour, ours too is laced with anger, sometimes bitterness, sarcasm, truths and half-truths, generalisations, etc.

This little book contains serious laughing matter created and collected and told and retold by us, for many years. By including the words and illustrations of feminist humourists from different parts of the world, we are saluting their creativity and joining them in laughter and solidarity.

On the occasion of Jagori's twentieth birthday, this book is an offering to all of us in the movement and those about to join it. It is also in celebration of our 25 years of feminist activism and solidarity in India, South Asia and globally.

Life is too precious to be taken too seriously. Therefore, let us be serious about laughter.

Let us keep laughing, loving and moving forward. Laughing matters!! In fact laughing matters a lot!!

Kamla Bhasin





Contents

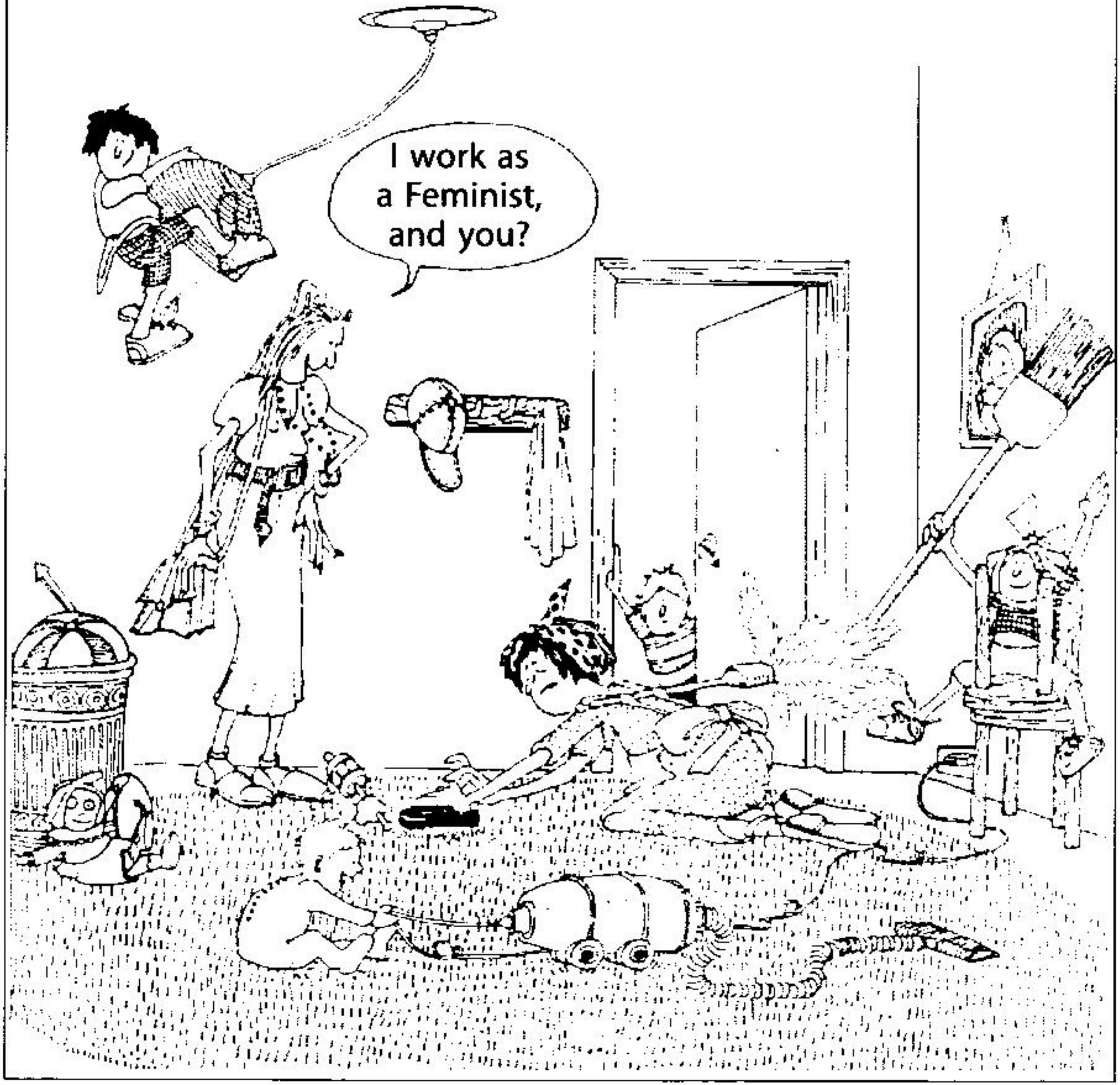
Laughing at Ourselves	1
Patriarchal Illogic	8
Feminist Logic	13
Language	21
Growing Up	25
Sex	29
Love and Marriage	33
Home and Family	43
Growing Old	50
Men, Women and Work	54
To Pee or Not to Pee	58
The Battle of the Sexes	61
Reflections	70

LAUGHING AT OURSELVES



Achieving liberation
requires
serious deliberation

Bindia Thapar



Ubertalli, Argentina

A senior feminist to a junior feminist, "I am very angry and disappointed to see how much you continue to care for your patriarchal family! Why can't you understand that as feminists we care only for ourselves".



We are Feminists! We are against ALL HIERARCHY!
But yes, sometimes, there is some ANARCHY in our group!!

Art Bindia Thapar



A new women's group in town was named SPLINTER. When asked for an explanation for this name, the reply was "Earlier our organisation was called SOLIDARITY, but, soon it splintered into many groups".





Who says we are powerless.
Haven't they seen our power to gossip and nag ?

Art Kari Rolfsen, Norway



Art Bindia Thapar

Question

How many feminists do you need to change an electric bulb?

Answer

FIVE

(One to change the bulb, two to write about the PROCESS and another two to make a video)

Question

How many feminists does it take to change a lightbulb?

Answer

None. It's not the lightbulb that needs changing.



When in trouble or in doubt,
run in circles, scream and shout!!



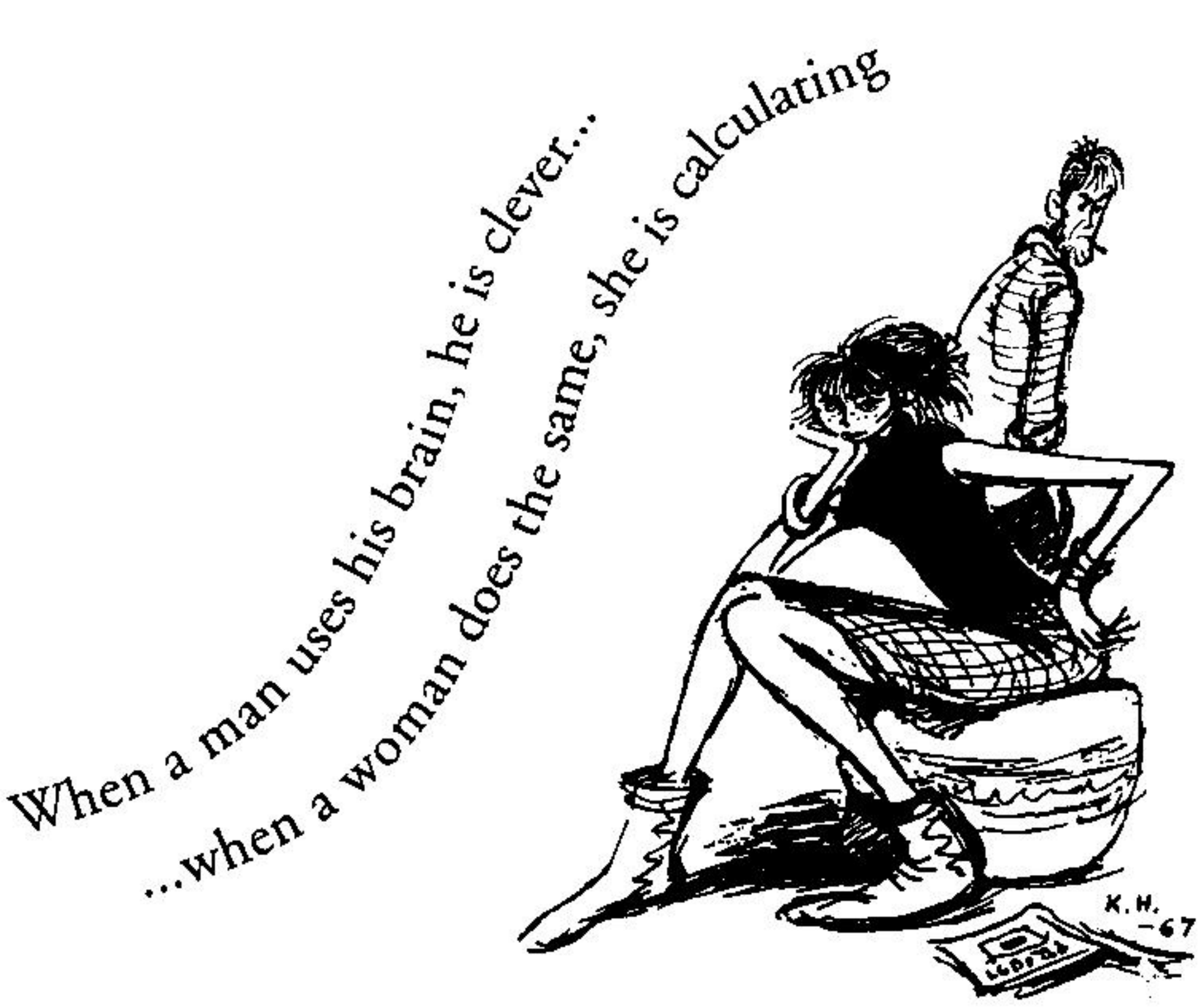
Whenever I sense this great desire to work overpowering me
I sit quietly in a corner and wait for it to pass.

All art Bindia Thapar

PATRIARCHAL ILLOGIC



Art Henrik Tikkanen, Finland



Art Kirsten Hoffman, Denmark

As soon as
a woman thinks
sufficiently fast,
one calls it
intuition.

When do men insist that
women are
illogical?

When a woman
doesn't agree with them!



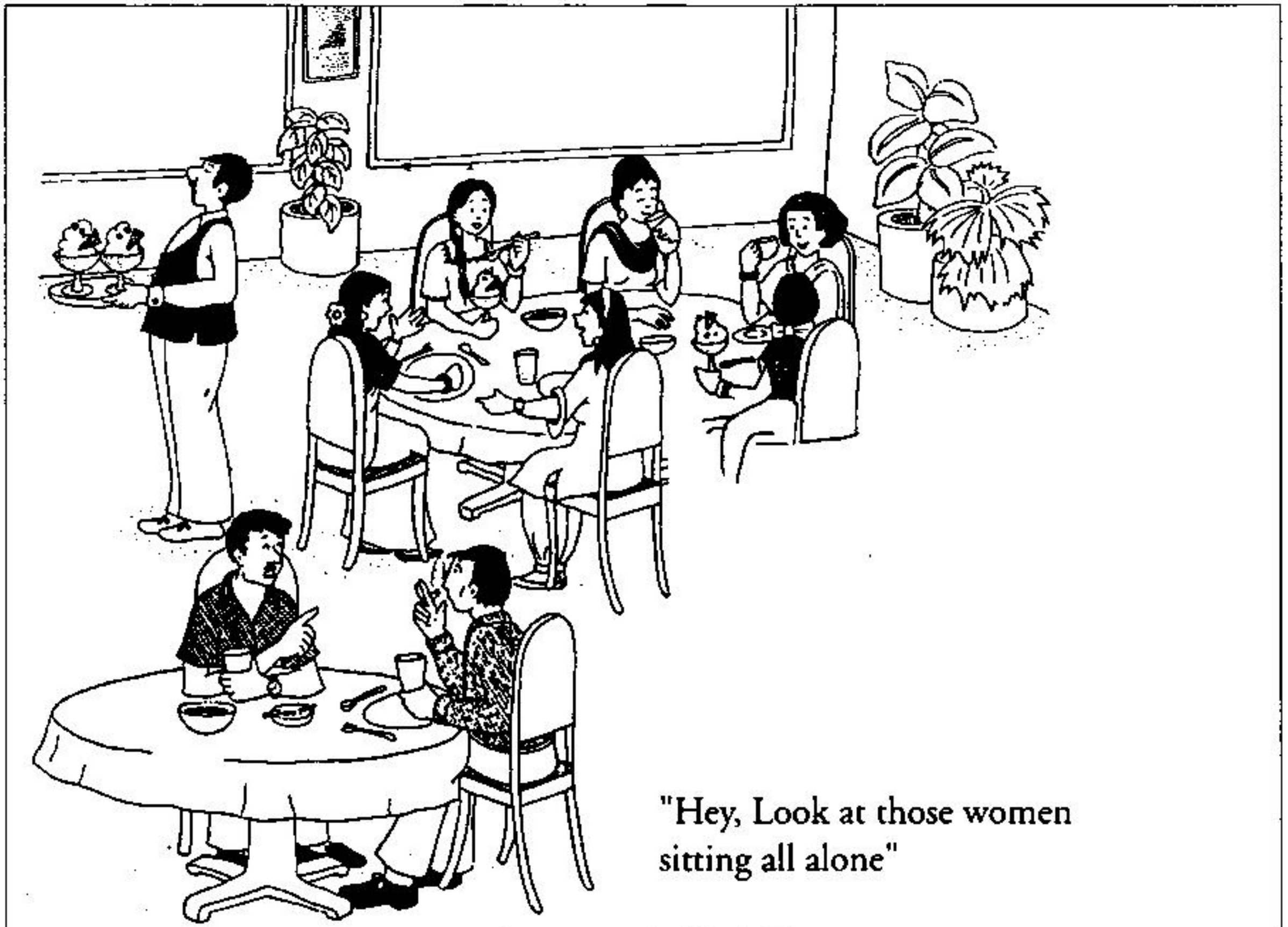
Now we should all STRIP.
Everyone except my wife, of course !!

Gunilla Dahlgren, Sweden

Two women who had had a rather hectic and difficult day, decided to go to a restaurant to have a quiet meal. They spotted a cosy restaurant and went in. They had barely settled into their chairs when the waiter came up to them, and in a half apologetic, half agitated tone, said, "Excuse me, ladies, I am sorry but we only serve men here."

The women looked at him in disbelief, thought for a moment and then one of them said "Well, in that case, bring us two !"



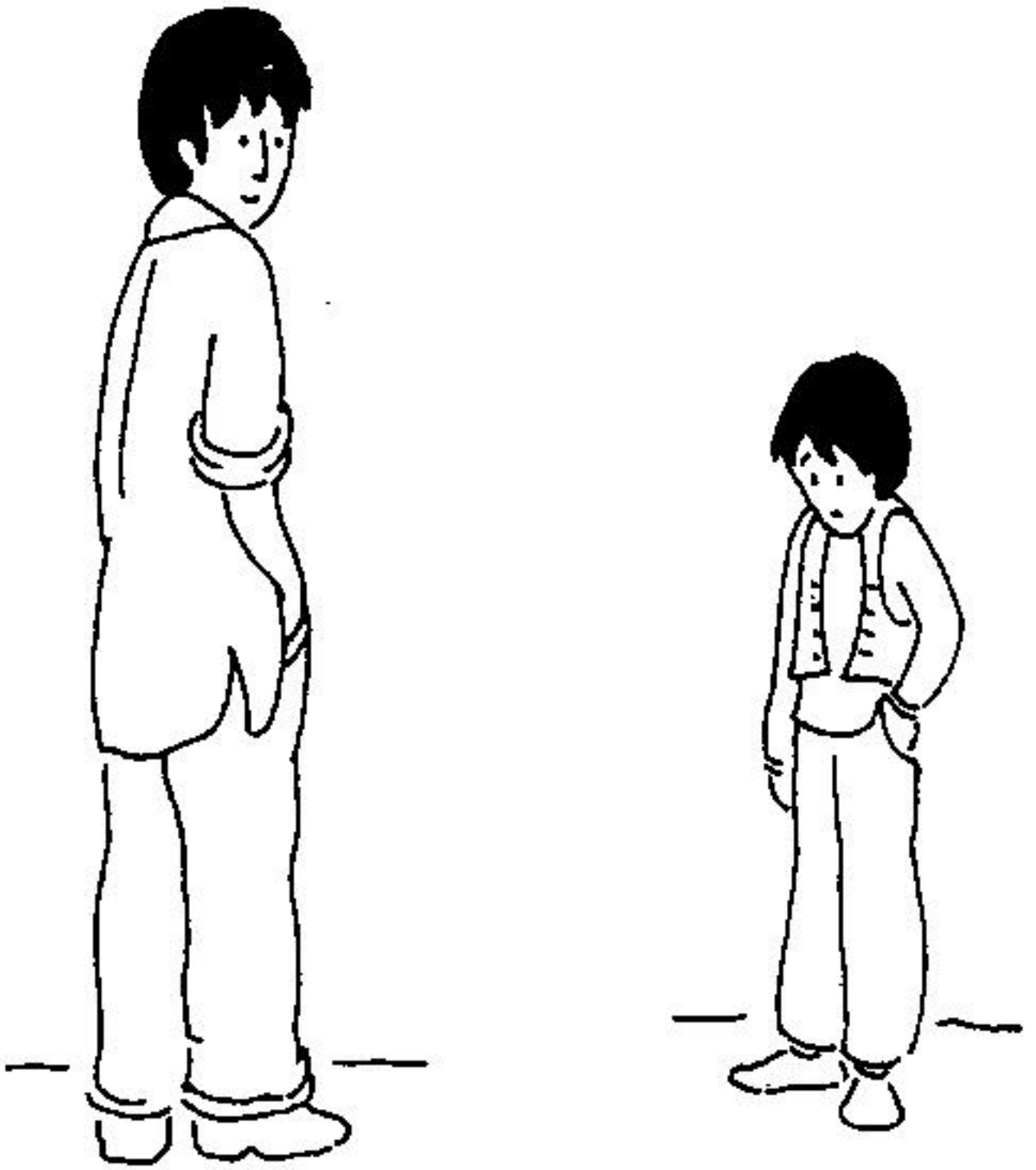


"Hey, Look at those women sitting all alone"

Art Bindia Thapar

One male journalist to another:
"Are you coming to the feminist group's press conference?"

Reply:
"No. Who wants to see those manly women with hair on their legs".



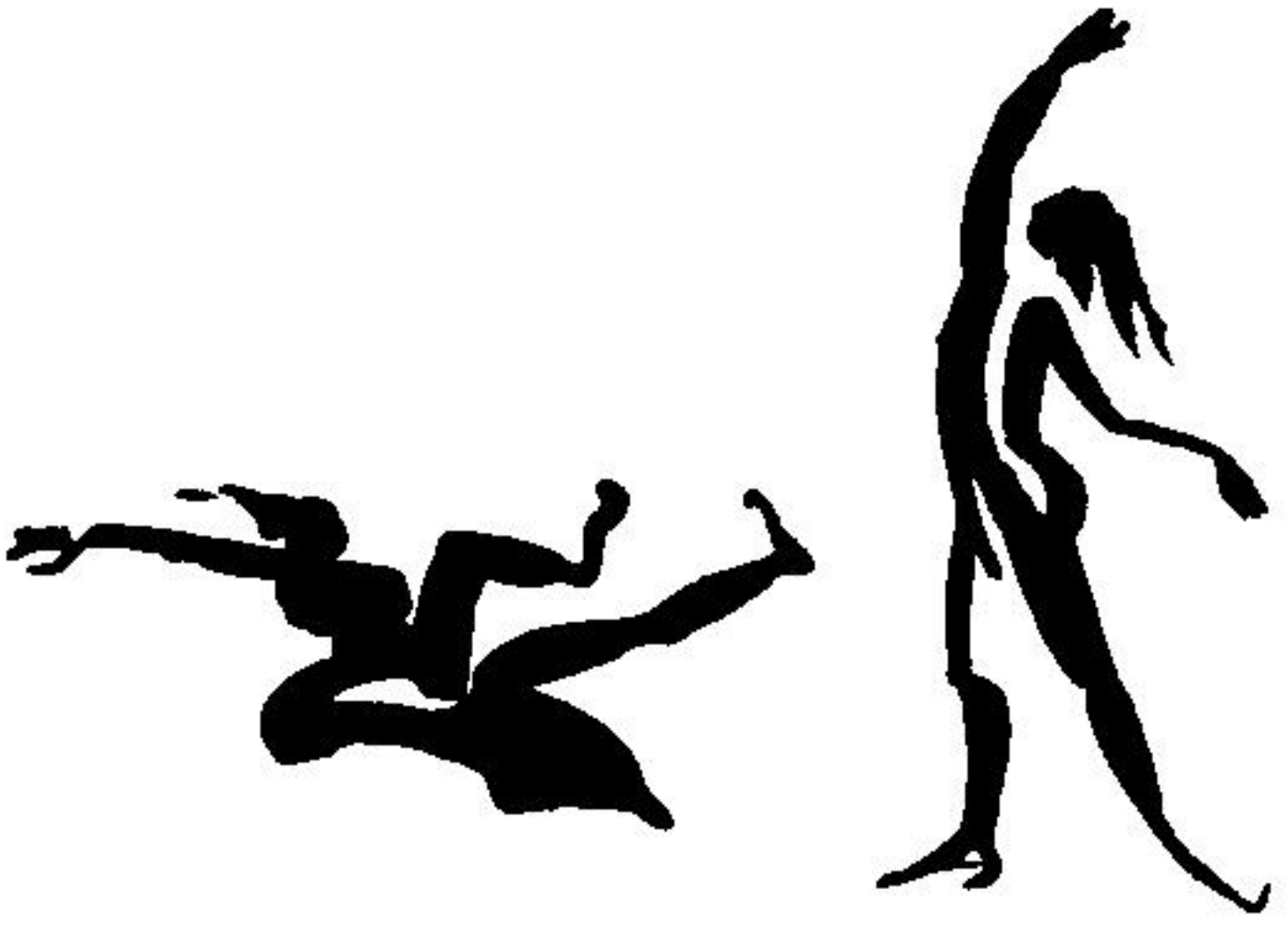
"Are you the father of this child?"
"No! I am the Mother."
"Oh, I am sorry!! Your son is lovely."
"Actually, that lovely child is my daughter".

FEMINIST LOGIC

People call me
a feminist
every time
I refuse to
be a doormat



Henrik Tikkanen, Finland



There can be no free men until there are free women.



To be considered
their equal,
women have to be
twice as good
as men.
Fortunately,
that's not difficult.



Sadly, all men are created equal.

Women have their faults.
Men have only two.
Everything they say
And everything they do.



Art Hønrik Tikkanen, Finland

In hostile,
patriarchal
societies
women need the
FIDO attitude.
Forget It and
Drive On.



Art Maria, Sweden

Don't think I am beaten down
This is my take-off position!



Women, don't just make
beds -
Make careers.

WOMEN,
AVOID BREAKDOWNS!!
GO FOR
BREAKTHROUGHS!!

If I can cook,
so can any man -
Because I don't cook
with my womb.



All art Bindia Thapar



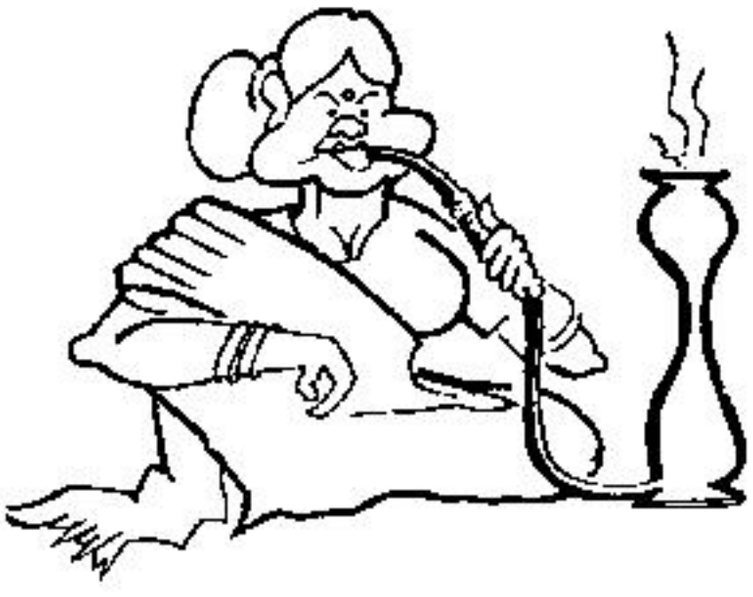
Art Bindia Thapar

LIFE IS MUCH EASIER
IF WE BURN OUR
BRAINS
AND KEEP OUR
BRAS



Art Bindia Thapar

TO MAKE THE BALANCE RIGHT
FOR FIFTY-FIFTY WE FIGHT



Art Sasi

Women's place is in the house..
That's why they should be
in both houses of Parliament.

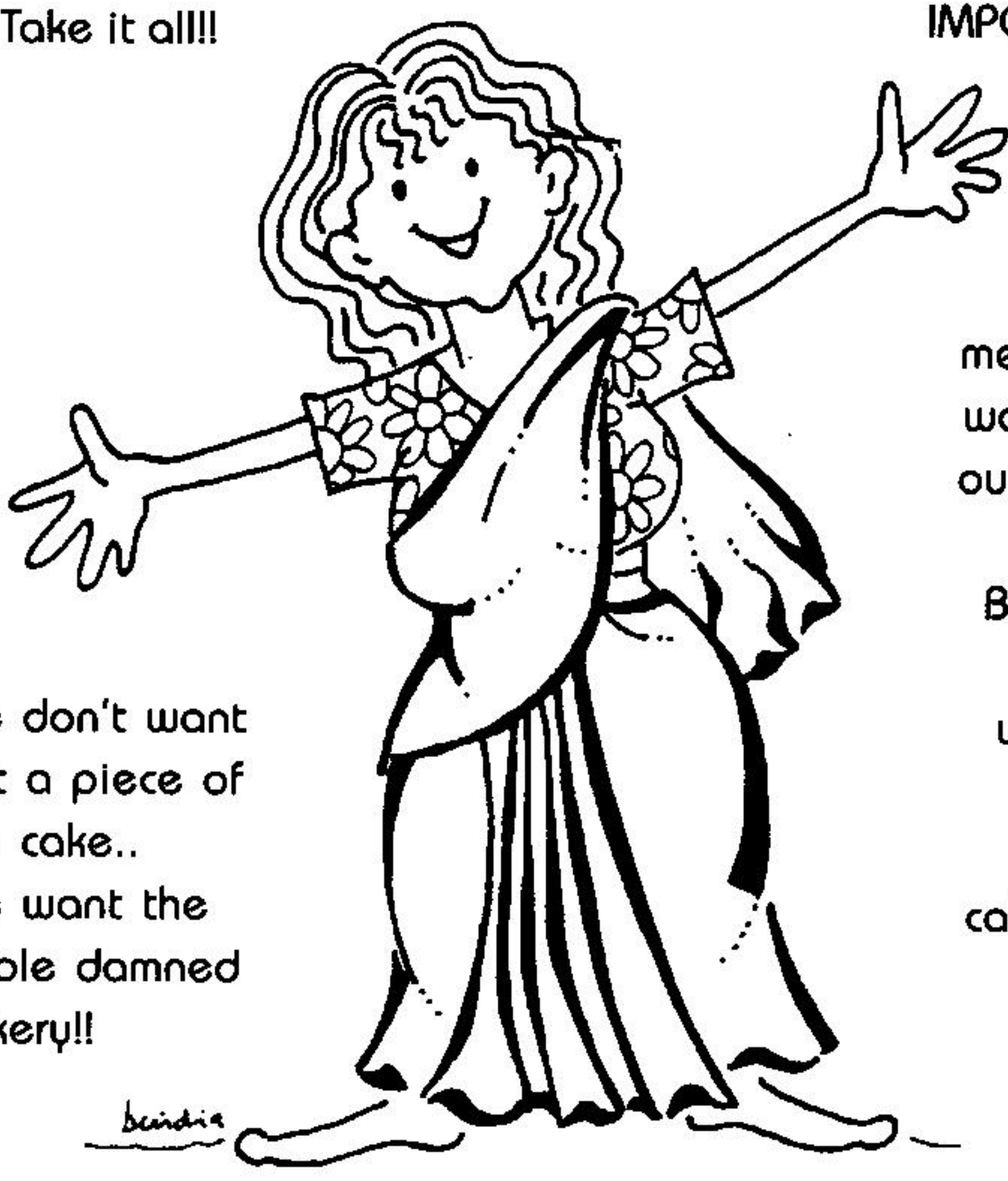


WE DON'T
WANT
COPPER T
WE WANT
PROPERTY!

Art Sasi

Women,
be REALISTIC..
Ask for the
IMPOSSIBLE!

Don't choose.
Take it all!!



Like many men, we also want to have our cake and eat it too. But wouldn't it be wonderful if we could have our cake and eat his too!

We don't want just a piece of the cake..
We want the whole damned bakery!!

Art Bindia Thapar

A WOMAN WITHOUT A
MAN IS LIKE A FISH
WITHOUT A BICYCLE



GOOD GIRLS GO TO
HEAVEN.
BAD GIRLS GO
EVERYWHERE.



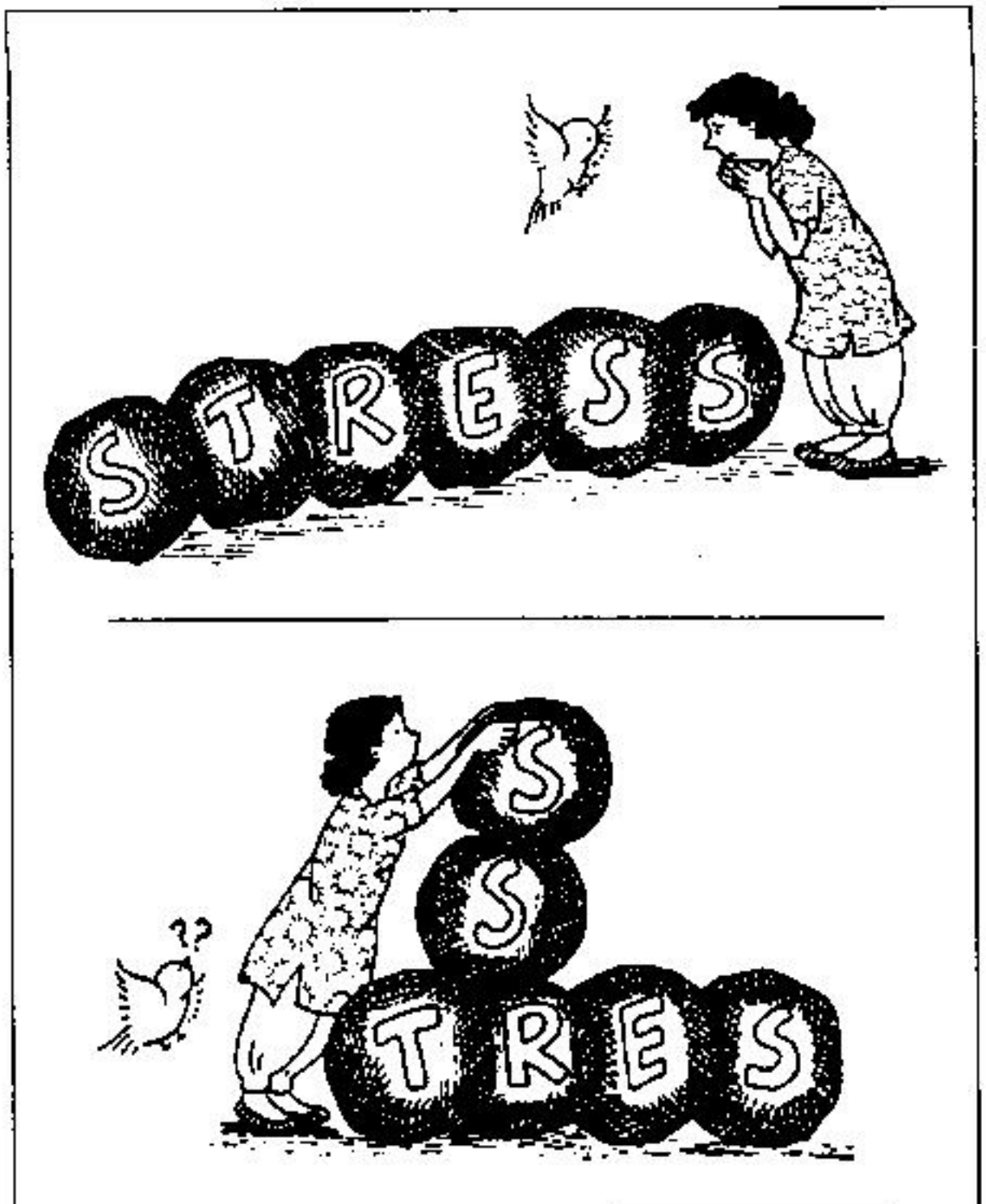
Women's prayer:

Mary conceived without
sinning.

Oh Lord,
let us sin without conceiving.



Every one cares for himself -
Only I care for myself.



Bindia Thapar

IF MARCH 8 IS WOMEN'S DAY, WHAT HAPPENS THE REST OF THE YEAR?

DISCRIMINATION!

Madness is
hereditary...
You can get it from your
children

WHY WAIT FOR SOMEONE TO BRING YOU FLOWERS? PLANT YOUR OWN GARDEN!

LANGUAGE



Rinda Thapar

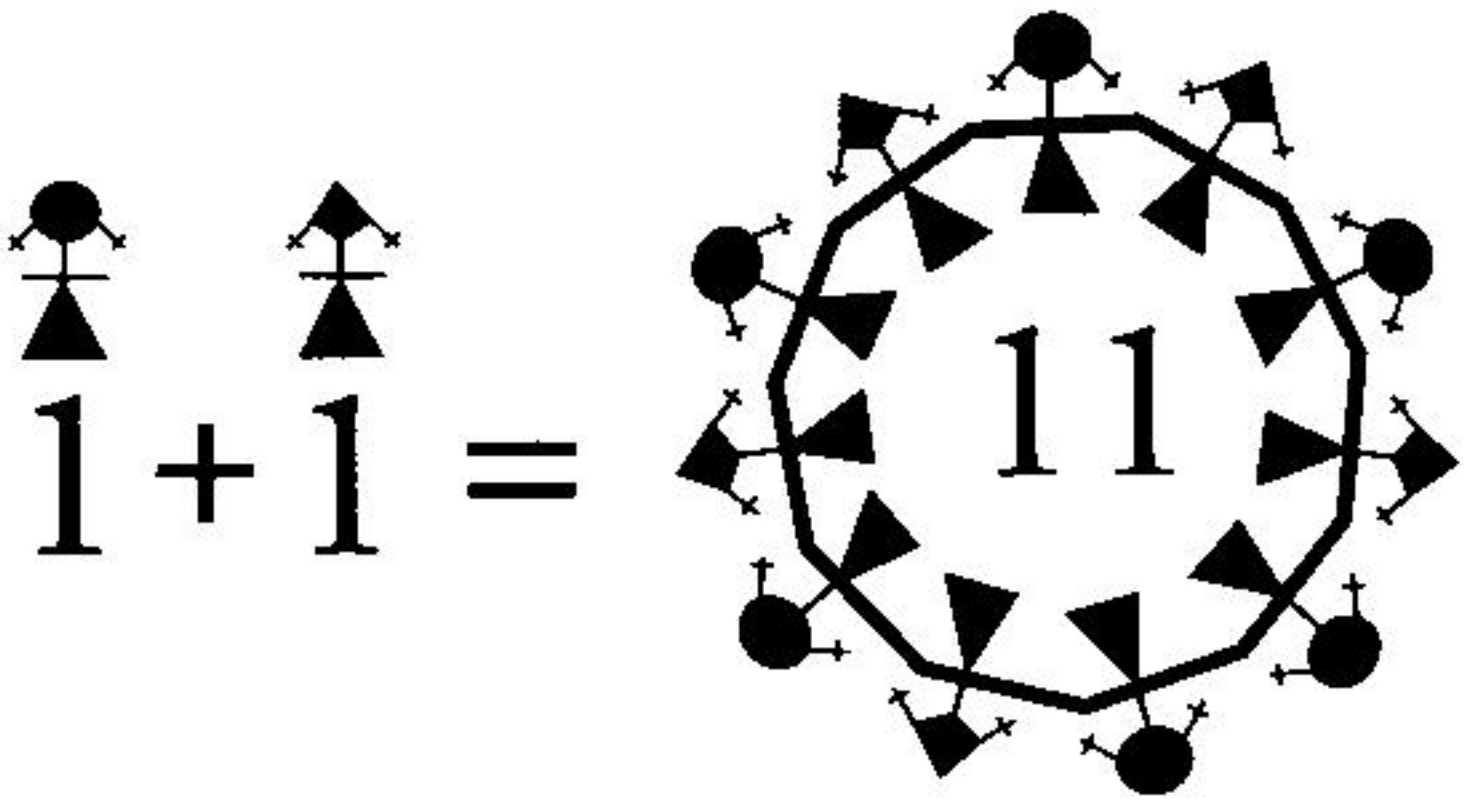
THE FEMINIST DICTIONARY

Ass, *n*: The masculine of "lass".

Bachelor, *n*: man who has missed the opportunity to make some woman miserable.

THE FEMININE OF HERO = SHERO

FEMINIST MATHS



... since history has ignored us,
we're writing herstory!

As tolerant feminists, we declare that the following words may remain unchanged:

MANhole
MANeater
MANslaughter

If it's MENstruation, why don't men get it??

WE WANT PEACE IN SOUTH ASIA
NOT PIECES OF SOUTH ASIA

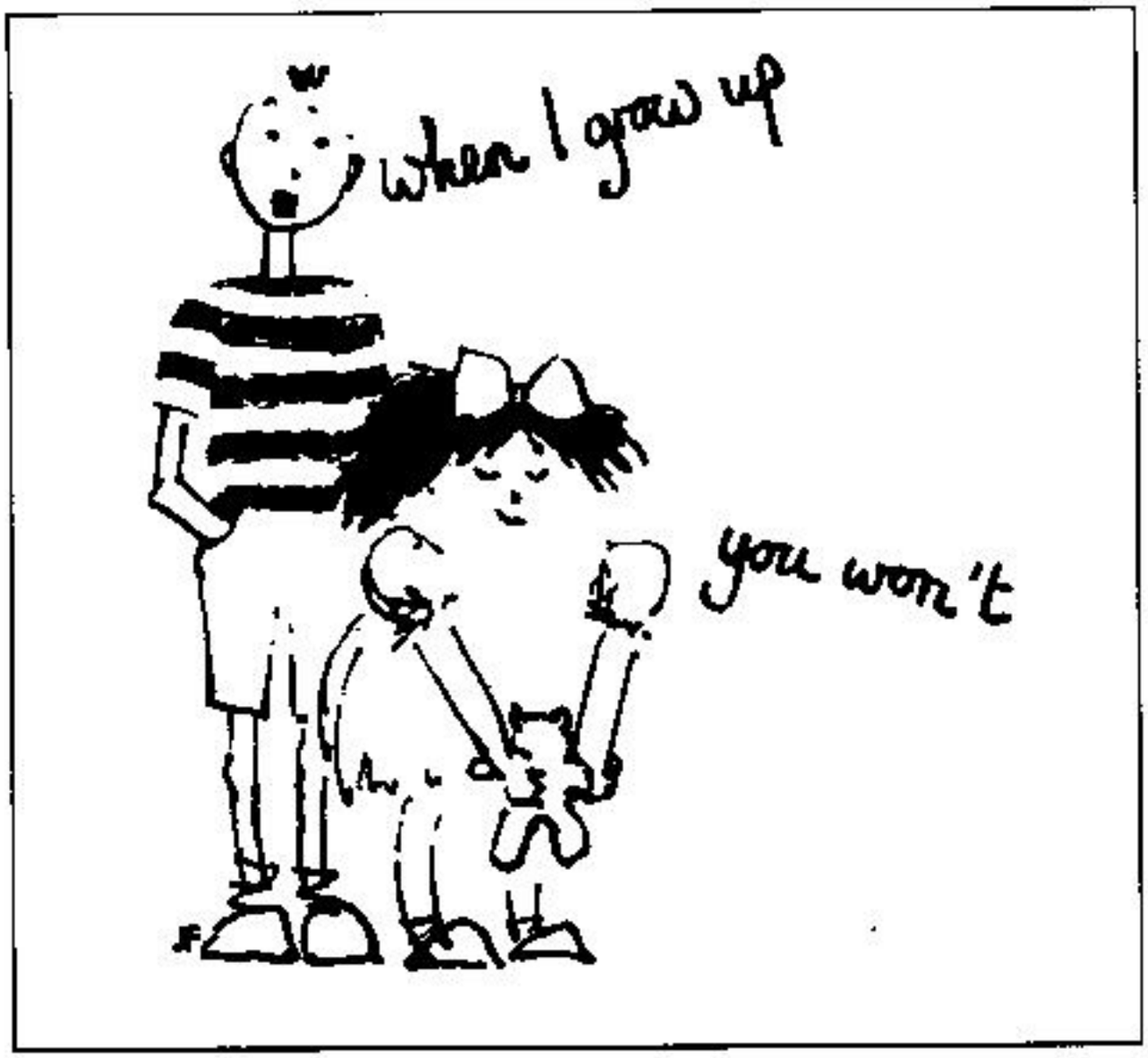
Dear Sirs • man to man • manpower • craftsman • working men • the thinking man the man in the street • fellow countrymen the history of mankind • one-man show • man in his wisdom • statesman • forefathers • masterful • masterpiece • old masters • the brotherhood of man • Liberty • Equality • Fraternity • sons of free men • faith of our fathers • god the father • god the son • yours fraternally • amen • words fail me

GROWING UP



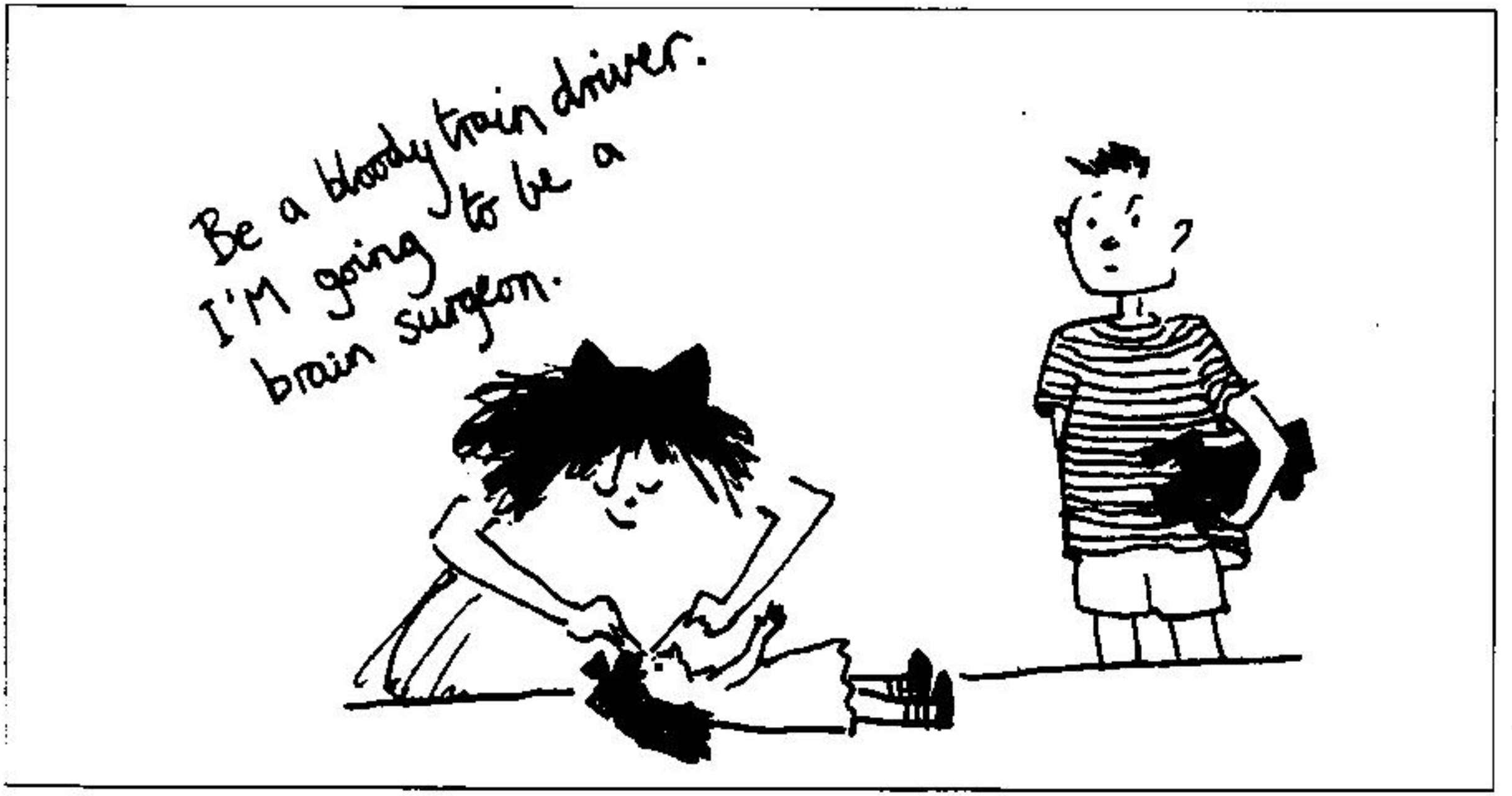
When I grow up,
I'll be a Feminist!

Art Bindia Thapar



Jacky Fleming





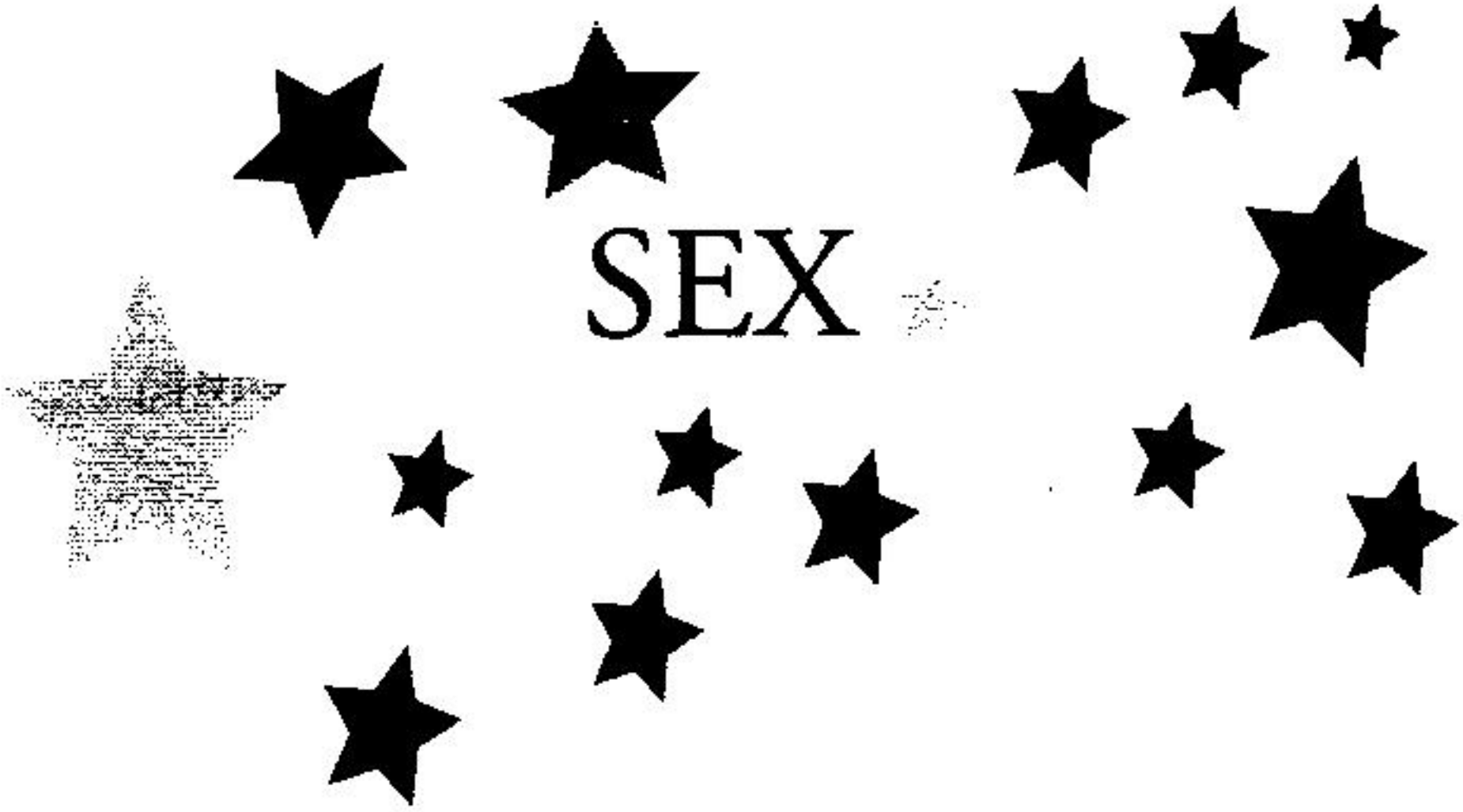
Jacky Fleming



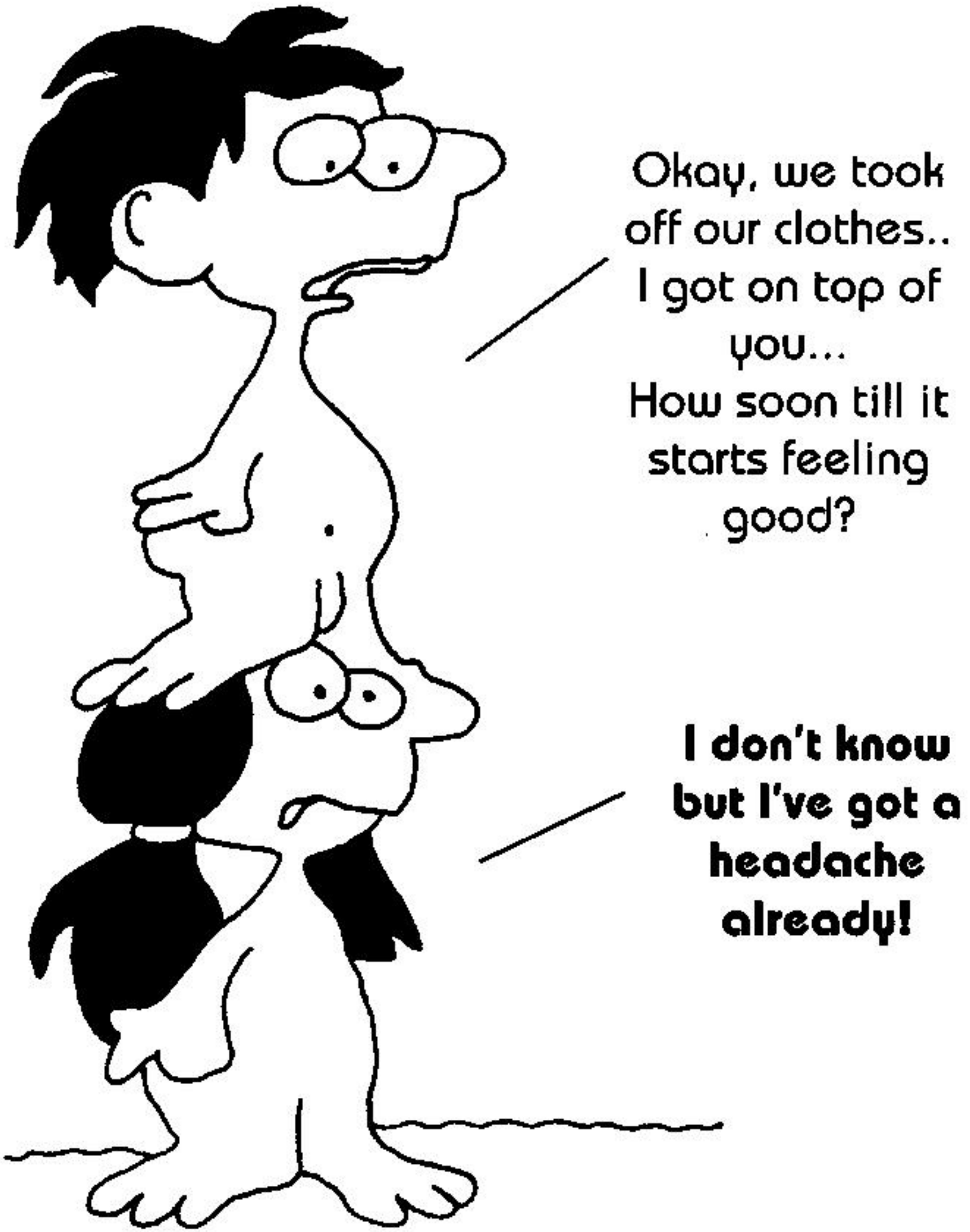
Art Bindia Thapar



I don't know why people call Amma
a SINGLE mother
when she has me.



Why have
sex
if you can have
gender?


Okay, we took off our clothes.. I got on top of you... How soon till it starts feeling good?
I don't know but I've got a headache already!

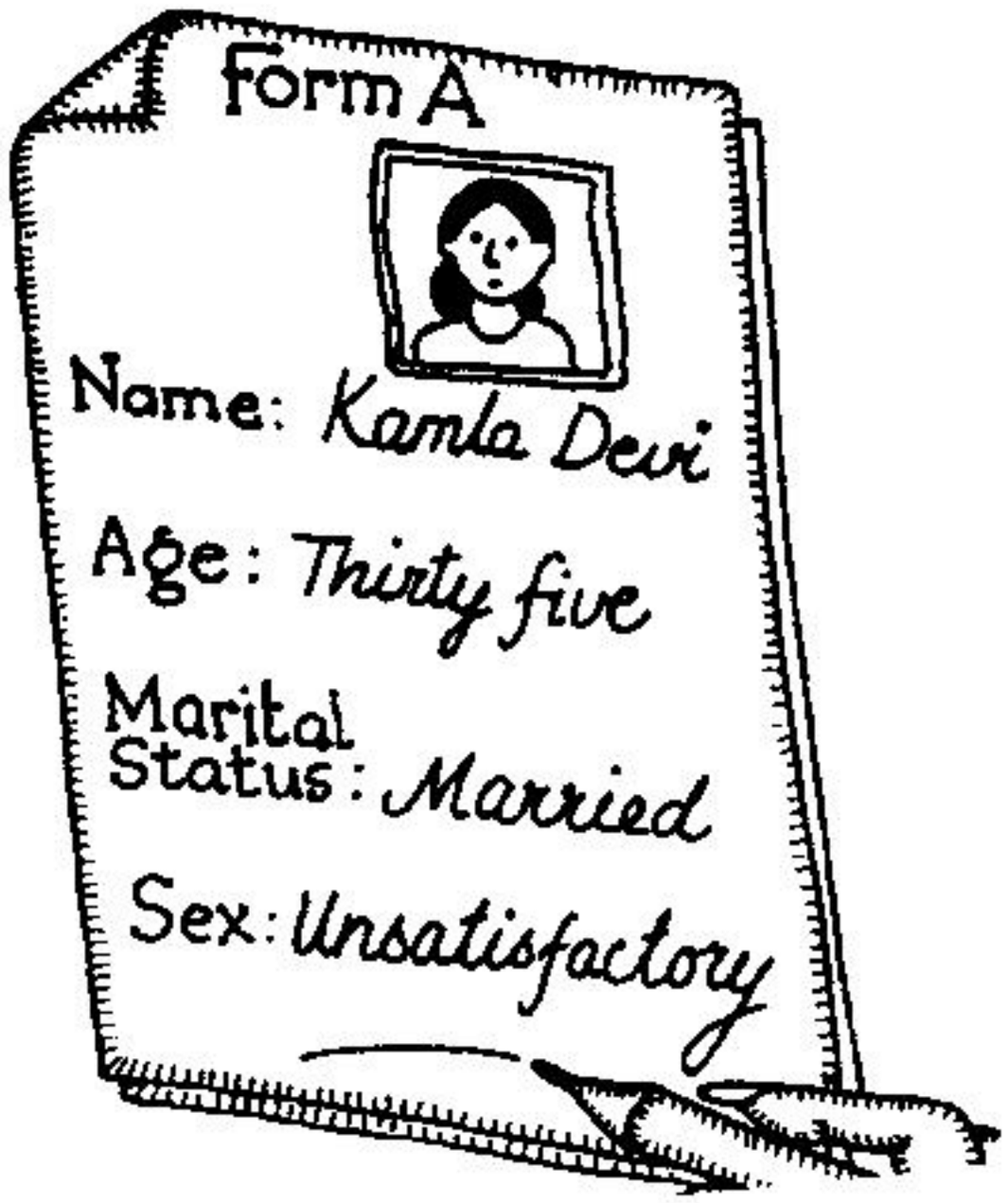
Because of drought in a certain part of Rajasthan for four consecutive years, most villagers found it difficult to survive. The local sex worker was so desperate that she was forced to go even to the local Baniya, famous for his miserliness. Almost begging, she said to him, "Baapji, you know how bad the situation is. Give me just five rupees and I will have sex with you."

"Five rupees! You're crazy! You give me just one rupee and I will have sex with you!"

A man was filling up an immigration form. In the column for sex, he wrote, "OCCASIONALLY."

The immigration officer returned the form to the man, saying, "Sir, here you have to fill in MALE or FEMALE."

The man wrote, "PREFERABLY female."



What is oral sex?
When you talk about it!

Why does a man enjoy masturbation so much?
Because this is the only time he is making love
to someone he really loves.

What is bi-sexual?
When you have sex twice a year!

In a school for priests, ten final year students were to be tested for their vows for celibacy and their control over their sexual urges.



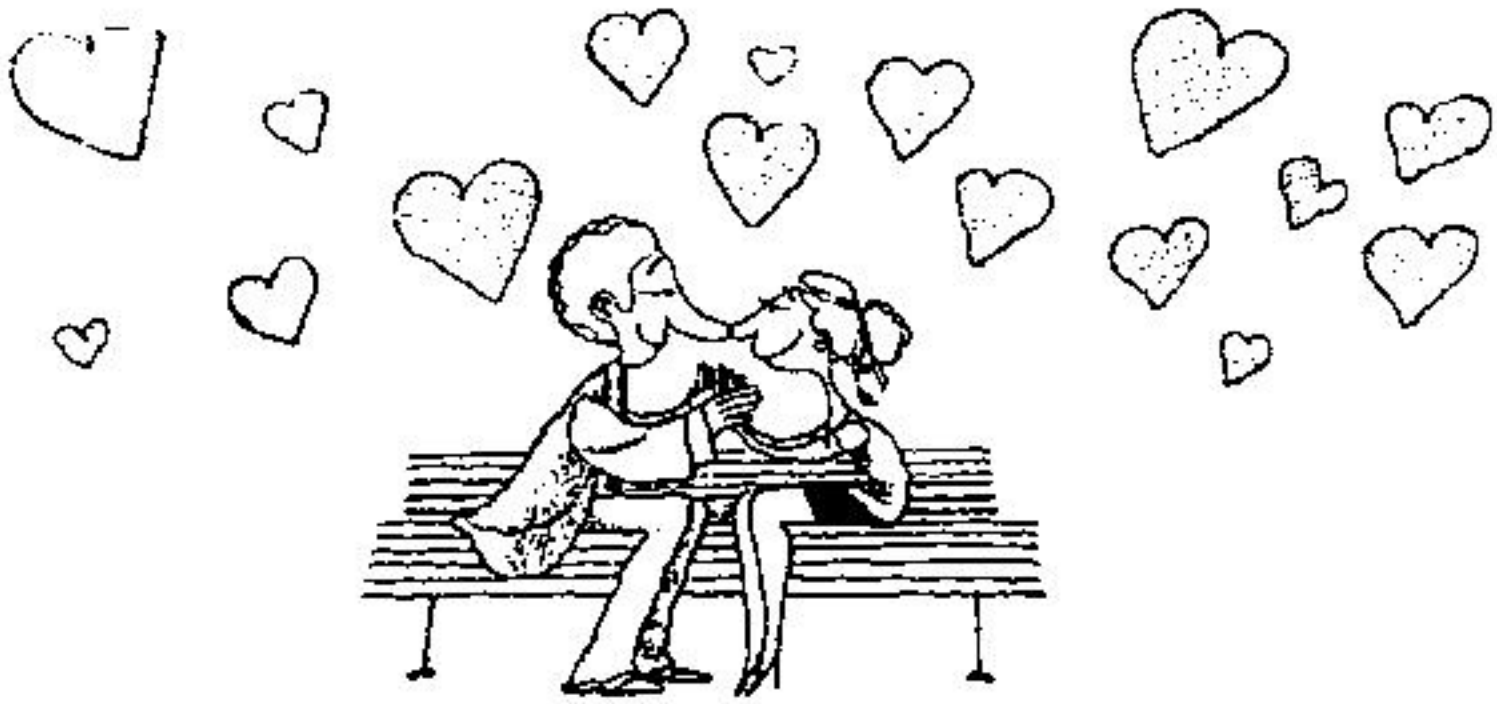
All of them were made to stand in a row, completely naked and to make the test precise; a little bell was tied to their penises.

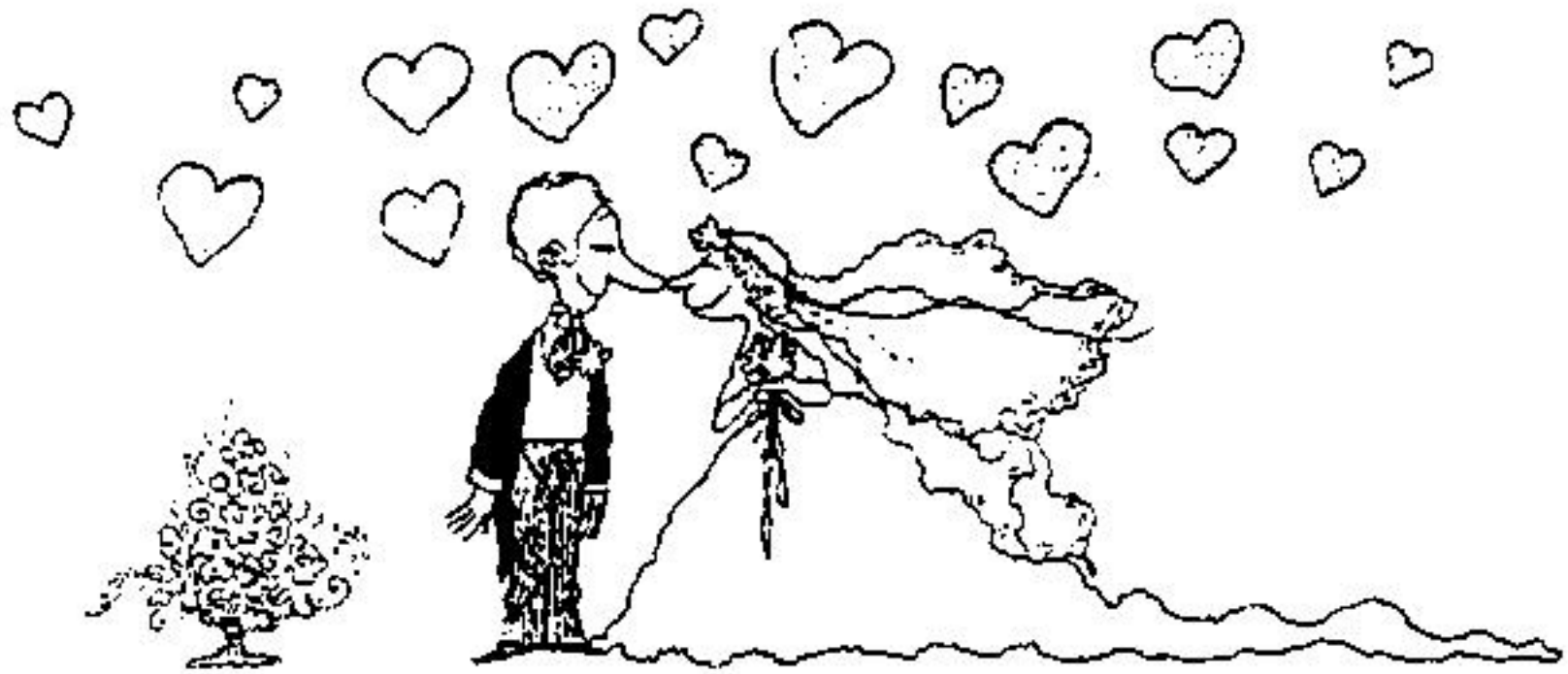


A very beautiful, provocatively dressed woman was brought to walk in front of them. Nine would-be-priests were in total control, but the bell of the tenth man rang. He was told he would have to spend another six month in the seminary and he was asked to take ten steps forward. As the naked man moved forward all the other nine bells started ringing loudly.

LOVE AND MARRIAGE

Love is blind, but marriage is a
real eye-opener...

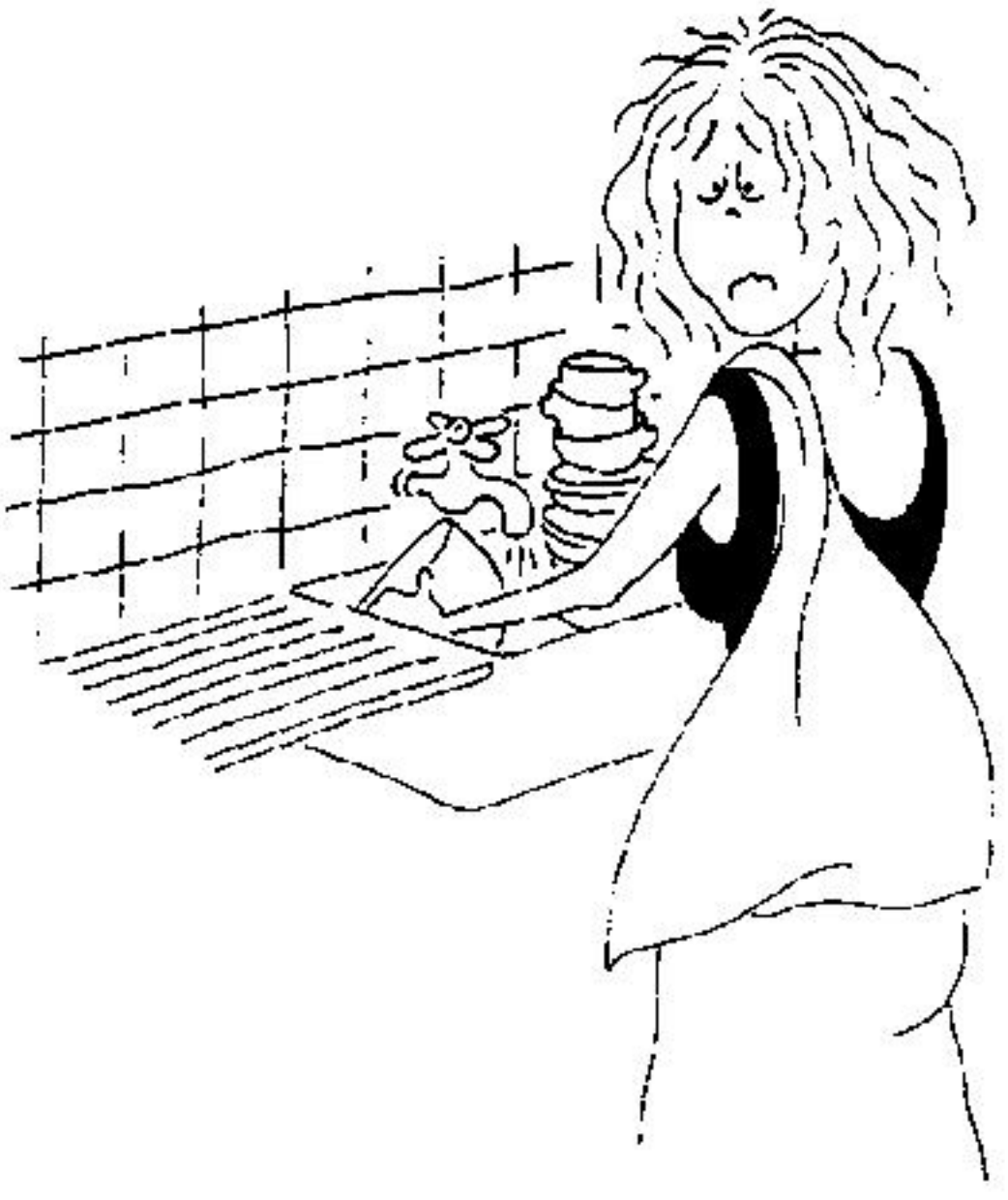






Everyone must get married.
After all, happiness is not everything.

ISN'T A WOMaN
INCOMPLETE BEFORE
MARRIAGE?
YES! AFTER MARRIAGE
SHE IS FINISHED!



Before marriage, I used to sink into his arms...
After marriage, my arms are in his sink!

Art Bindia Thapar



A SHORT LOVE STORY



He: "Will you marry me, darling?
She; "No, dearest."

And they lived happily ever after...



The trouble with
some women is that
they get
all excited
about nothing,
and then
they marry him.

Don't marry for money
It is cheaper to take a loan

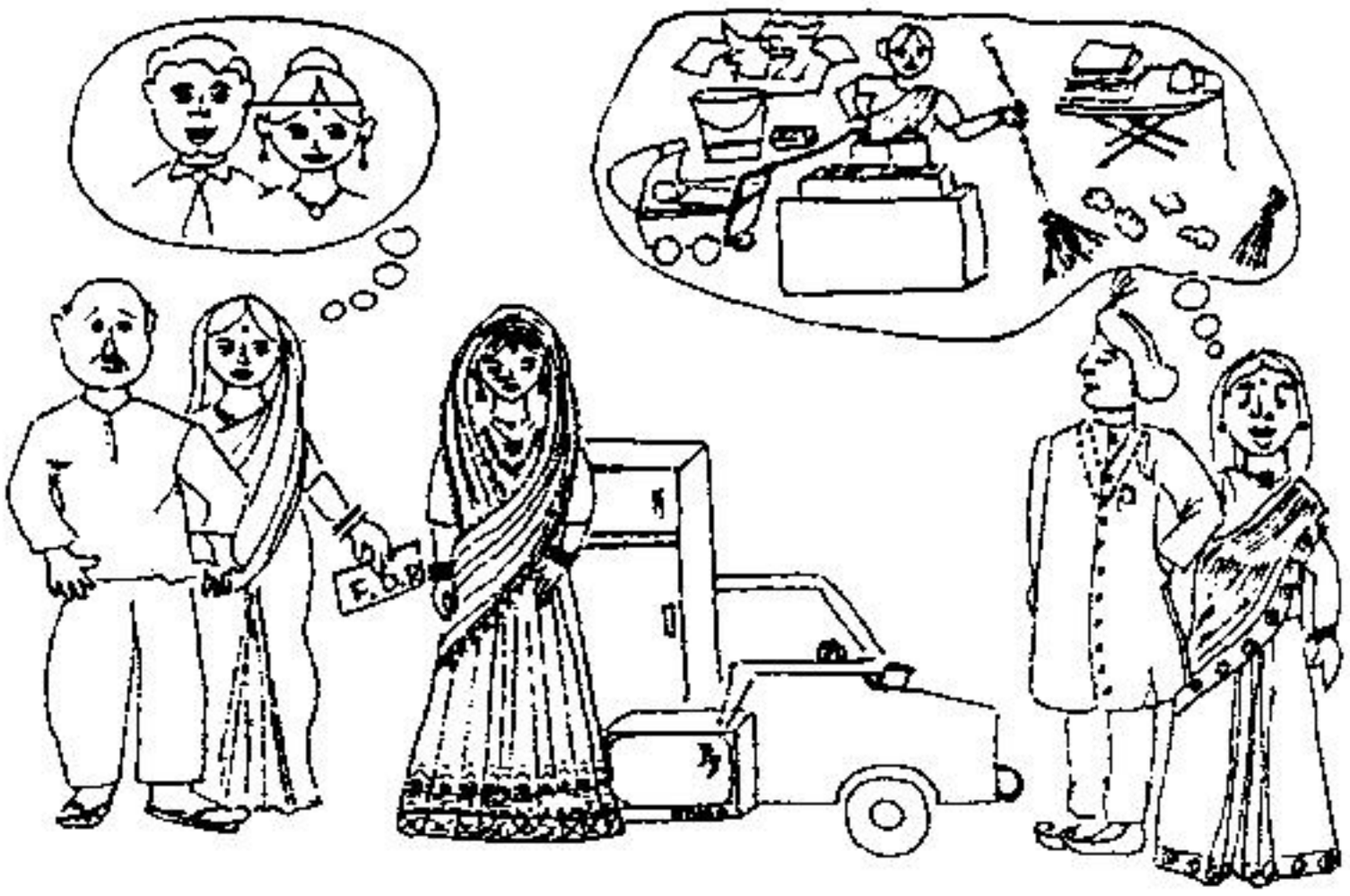
Single women claim that all the good men are married,
while all married women complain about their lousy husbands.
This confirms that there is no such thing as a good man.

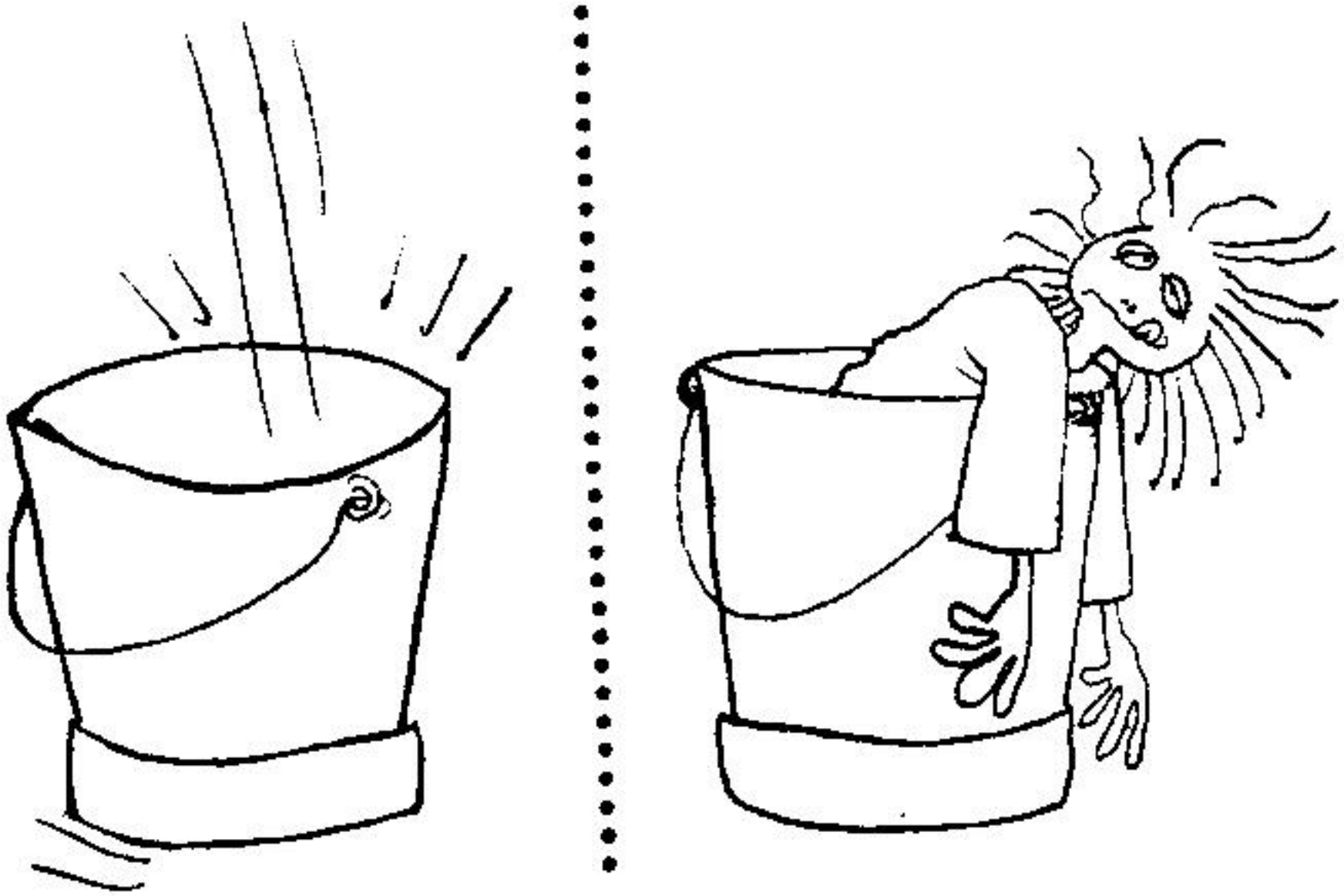
Question

Why do so many women pray and fast to get good husbands?

Answer

They need godly intervention because good husbands are RARE.





Marriage is supposed to be a harbour in the storm. But more often it is a storm in the harbour.

"Can I have a fuck for five hundred rupees?" he asked me at 0.42 a.m. at this empty, desolate, freezing bus stop.

First I shook my head, but then I said "Not for money. But if you clean the house and wash up the dishes and do some ironing, you can."

At that, he turned around and walked away with a hanging head.



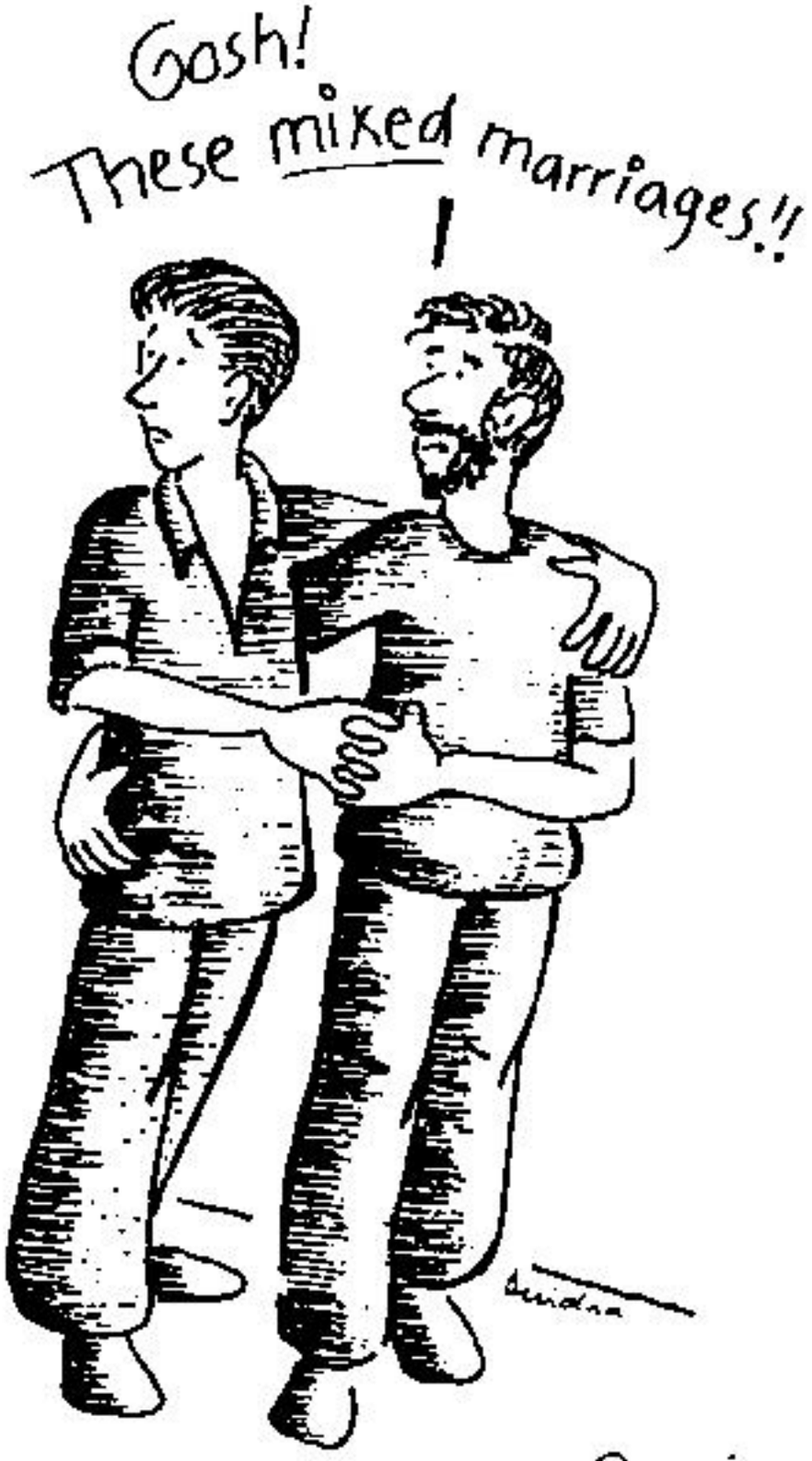
Question

What is common between husbands and sperms?

Answer

One in so many million works !

There are many NOTS in the wedding KNOTS !!



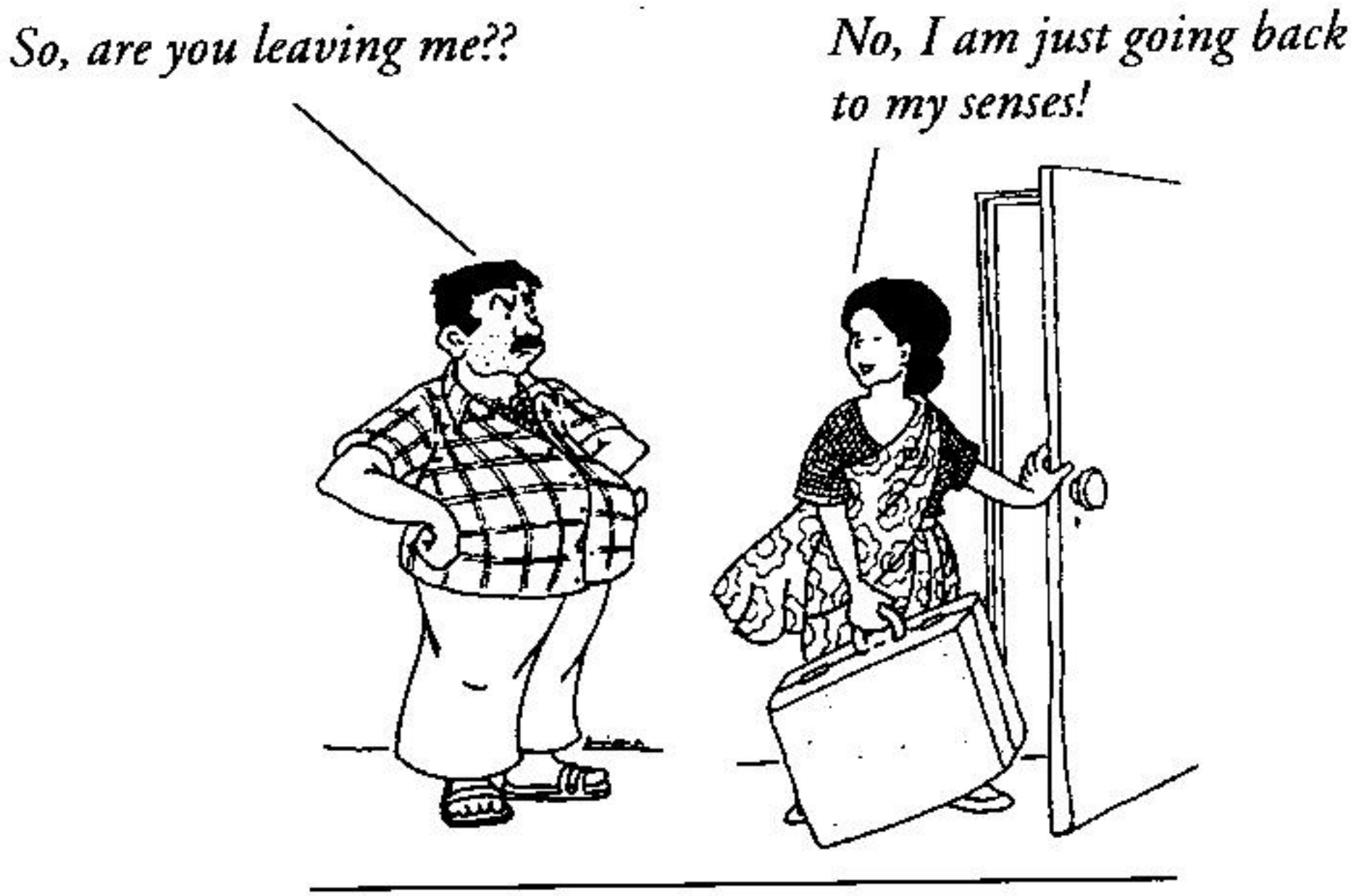
Art Bindia Thapar

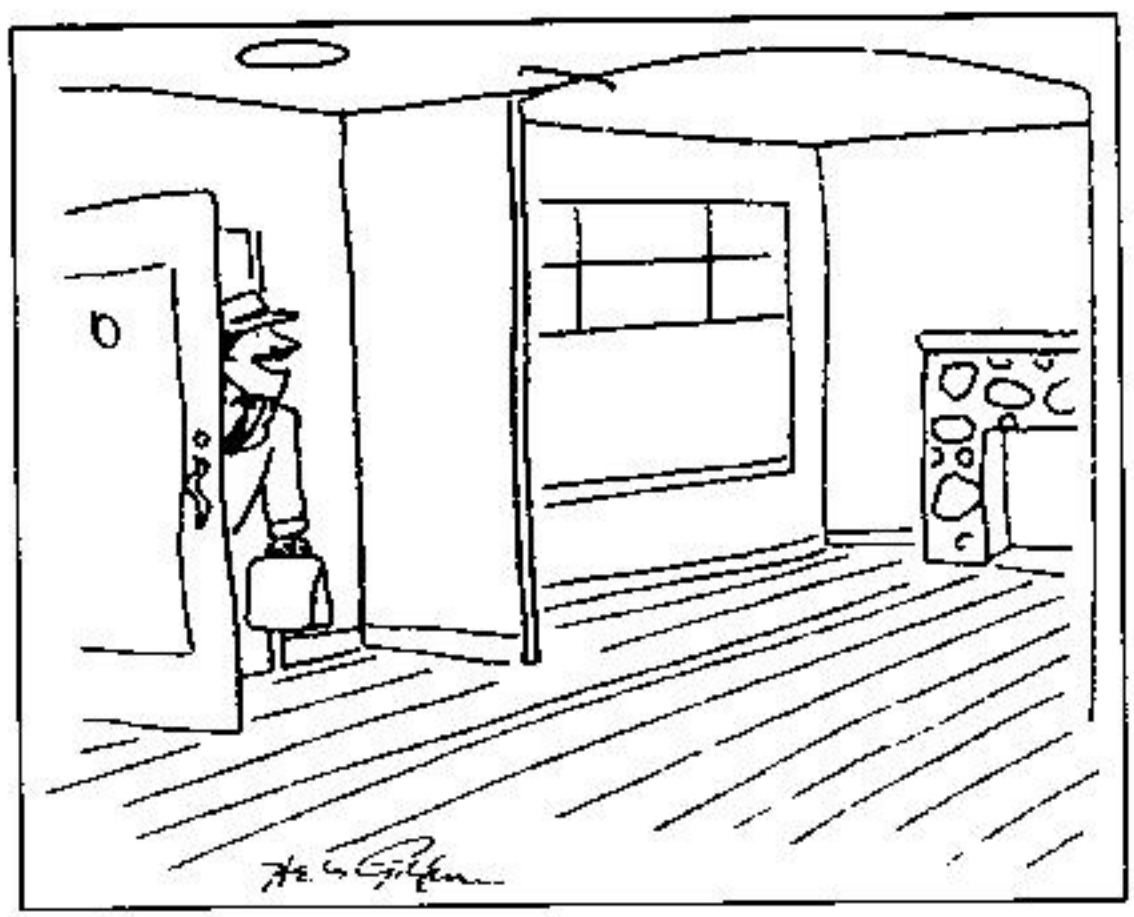
Question

What's the best way to have your husband remember the anniversary?

Answer

Get married on his birthday !





Darling, I have decided to pardon you and have come back.

A Woman's husband died after six months of marriage. The post-mortem report declared that he had died of eating poisoned mushrooms.

Some months later the woman got married again. Alas! A few months later the second husband died too.

The second post-mortem report also declared that he had died of eating poisoned mushrooms.



Art Bindia Thapar

Poor woman! She had to get married again. After almost a year the third husband also died. This time the post-mortem report declared that he had died of head injuries because he refused to eat poisoned mushrooms.

BIGAMY

IS ONE HUSBAND TOO MANY...

MONOGAMY

IS THE SAME.

My husband eloped with my best friend...
Gosh, how I miss my friend!

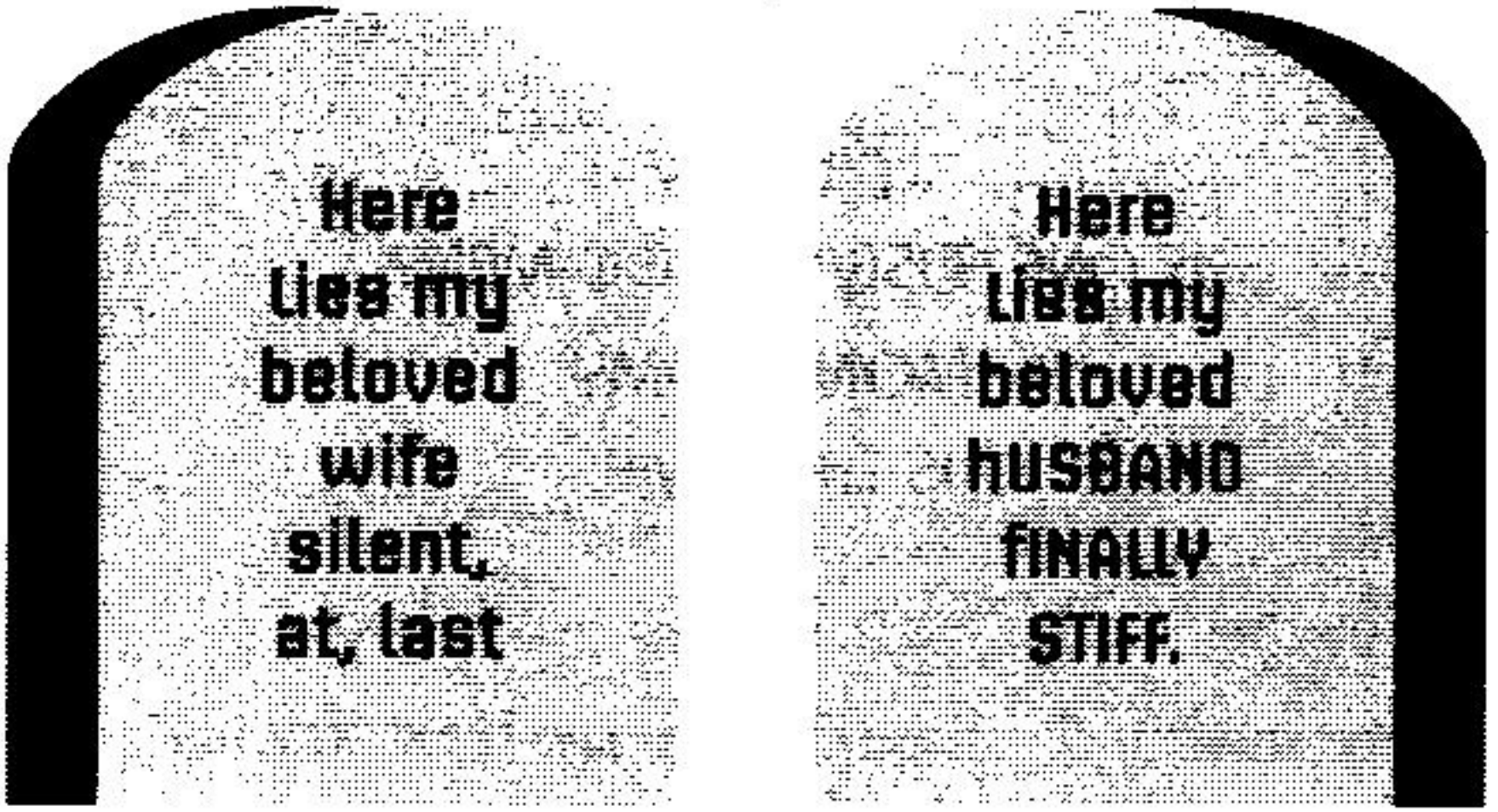
What is the biggest cause of divorce?

MARRIAGE

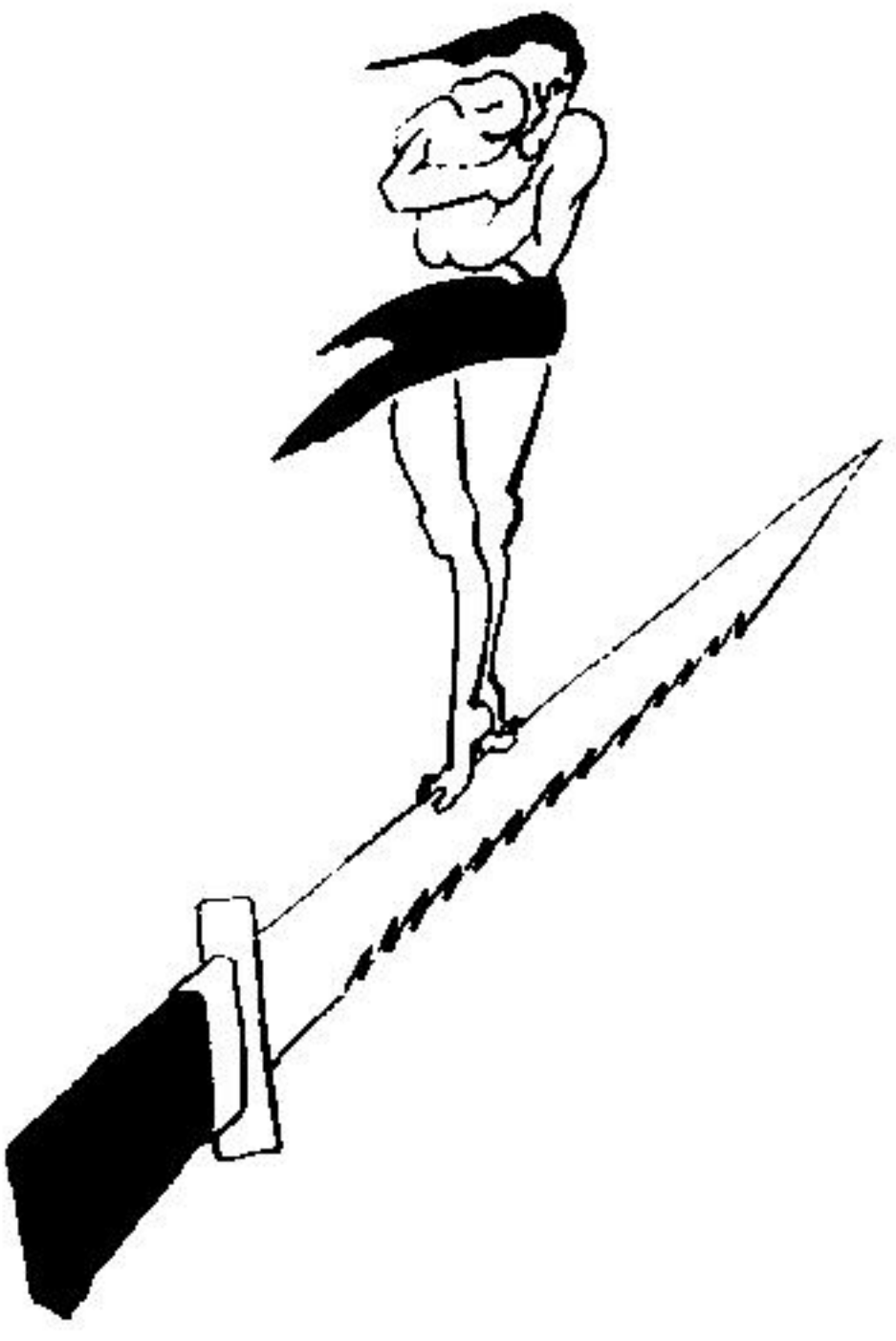
What do you call a man with 99% of his intelligence gone?

Divorced!

"Thank God, it was not the cow,"
said the woman when her husband died.



HOME AND FAMILY



Pernille Klovedal Helweg, Denmark

A man's home is his castle.

Let him clean it !!

What's a man's idea of
helping with the housework?

Lifting his legs so you can
vacuum.

**Never trust a man
who says he's the
boss at home.**

**He probably lies
about other things
as well.**

I AM AN EXCELLENT HOUSEKEEPER
EVERYTIME I LEAVE A MAN,
I KEEP HIS HOUSE

How many husbands does it take to change a light bulb?

We'll know as soon as one gets off the couch and does it!

How many men does it take to change a roll of toilet paper?

Nobody knows.
It has never happened

How many men does it take to dirty up 12 pots while cooking a meal?

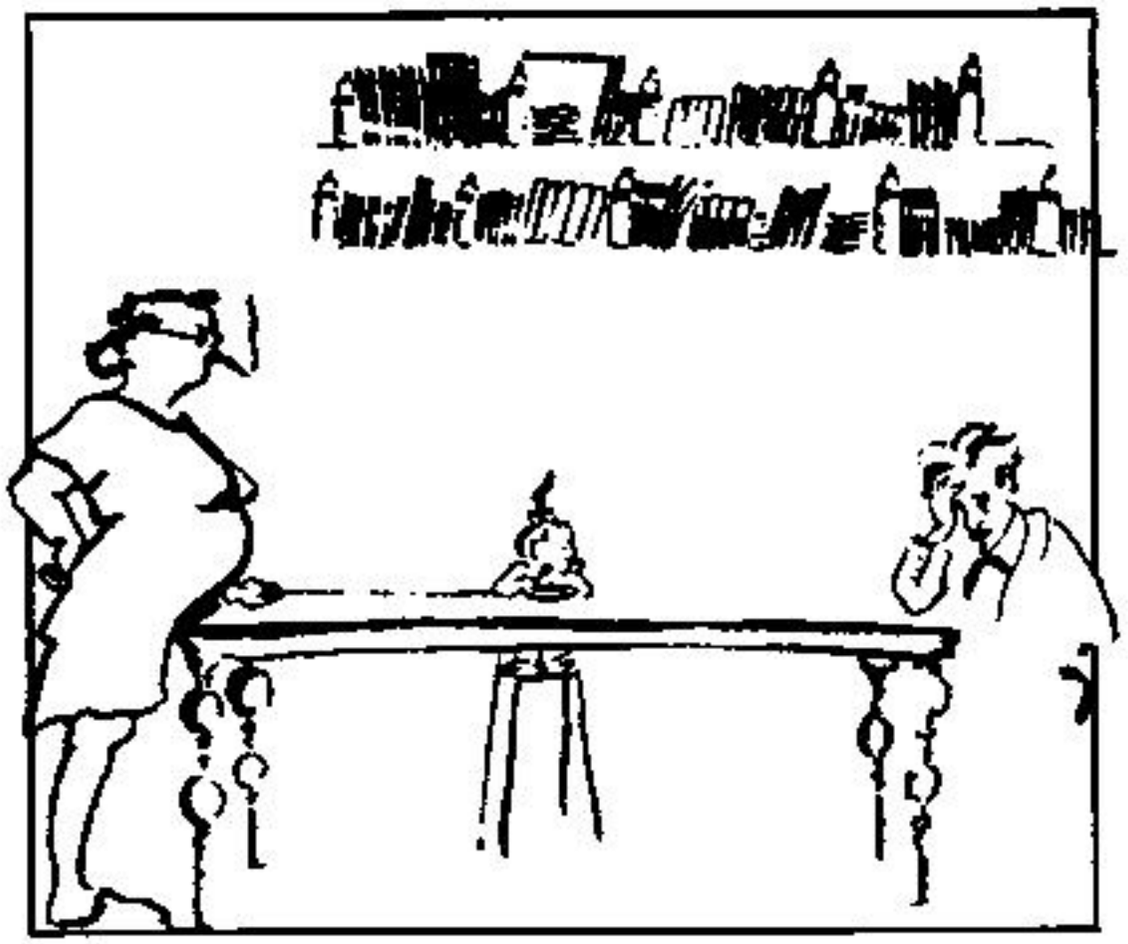
One.


I'VE GOT RHYTHM,
I'VE GOT RHYTHM,
I'VE GOT TWELVE KIDS,
WHO COULD ASK FOR
ANYTHING MORE...



Ari Bindia Thapar

"Darling, if you just take care of them for the next few years,
I will take care of their ideological development once they grow up."

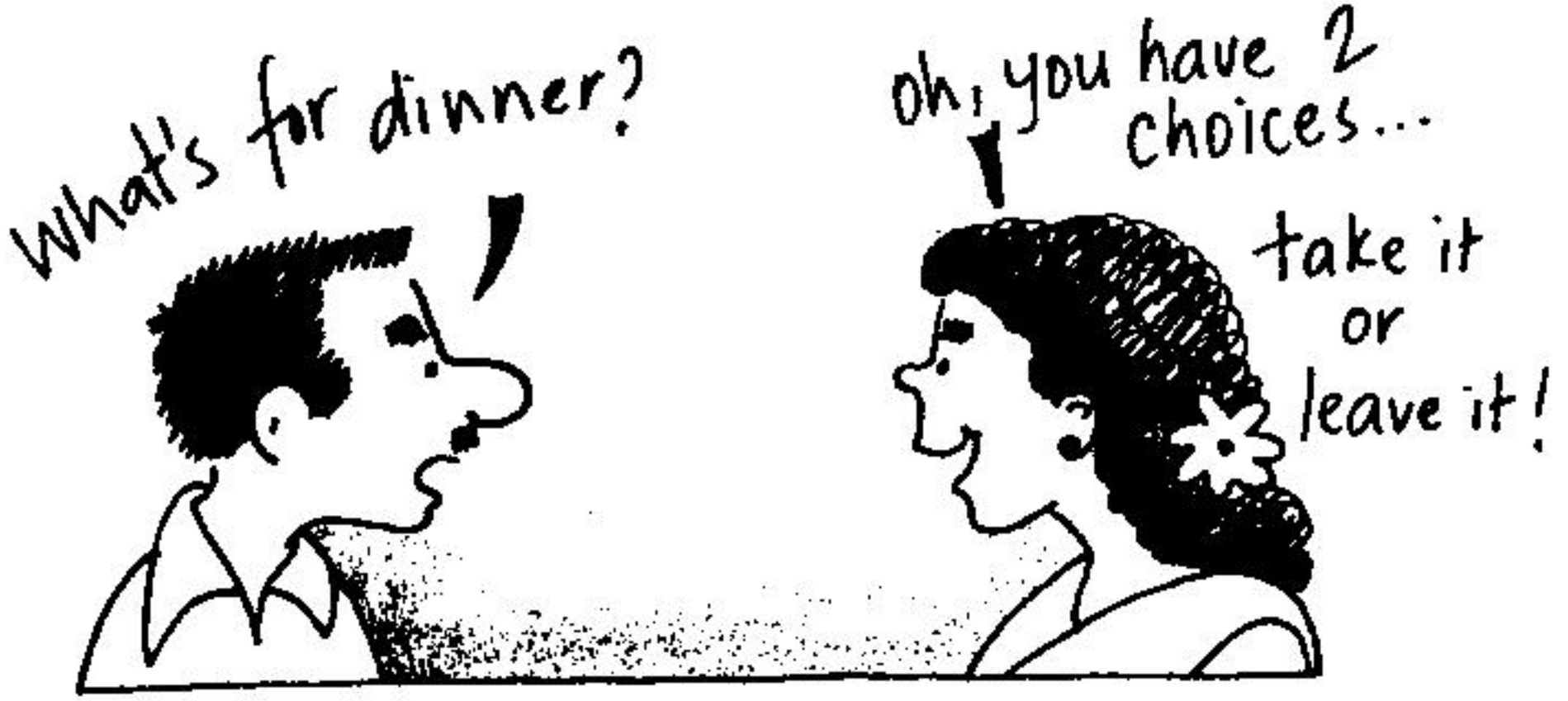


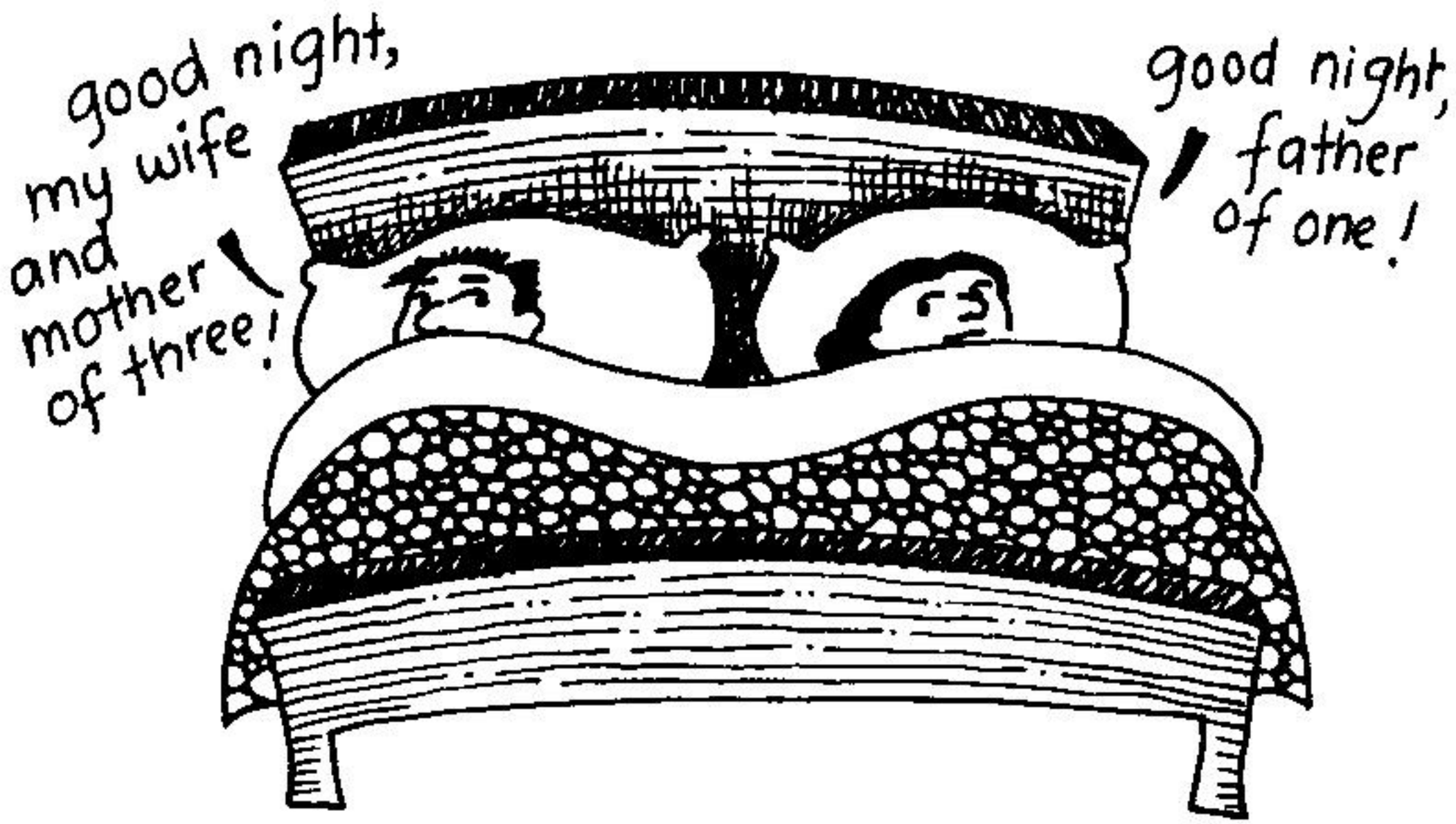
Don't tell me you have forgotten your son's name AGAIN!

Pernille Klovedal Helweg, Denmark



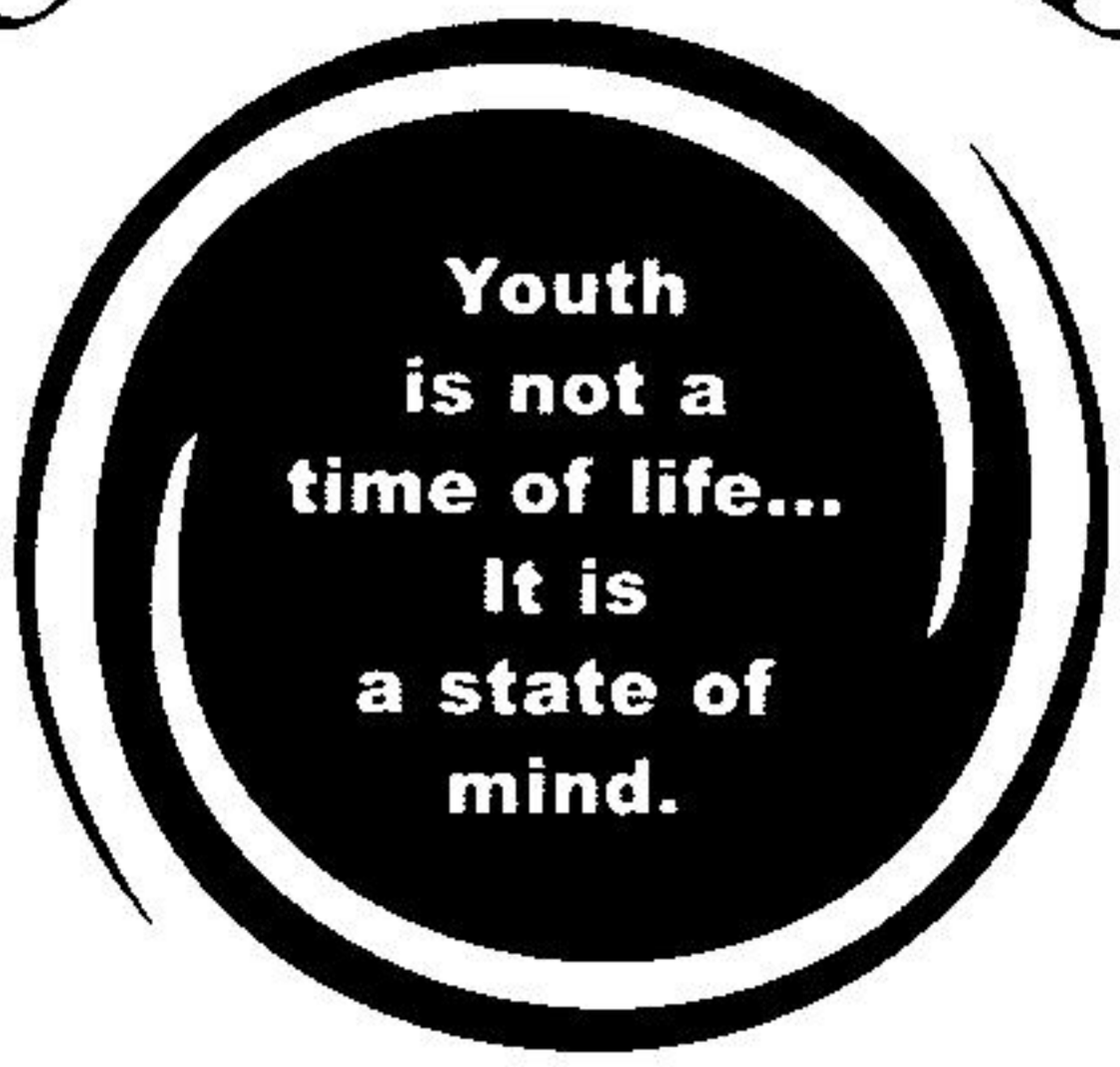
Will such days ever come?





All Art Bindia Thapar

GROWING OLD



I don't complain
about getting old.
Just think of the
people who are
denied the privilege.

WE BELIEVE IN LIFE BEFORE DEATH

Growing old can be a wonderful adventure, if we remember that the keyword is GROWING.



Art Sasi

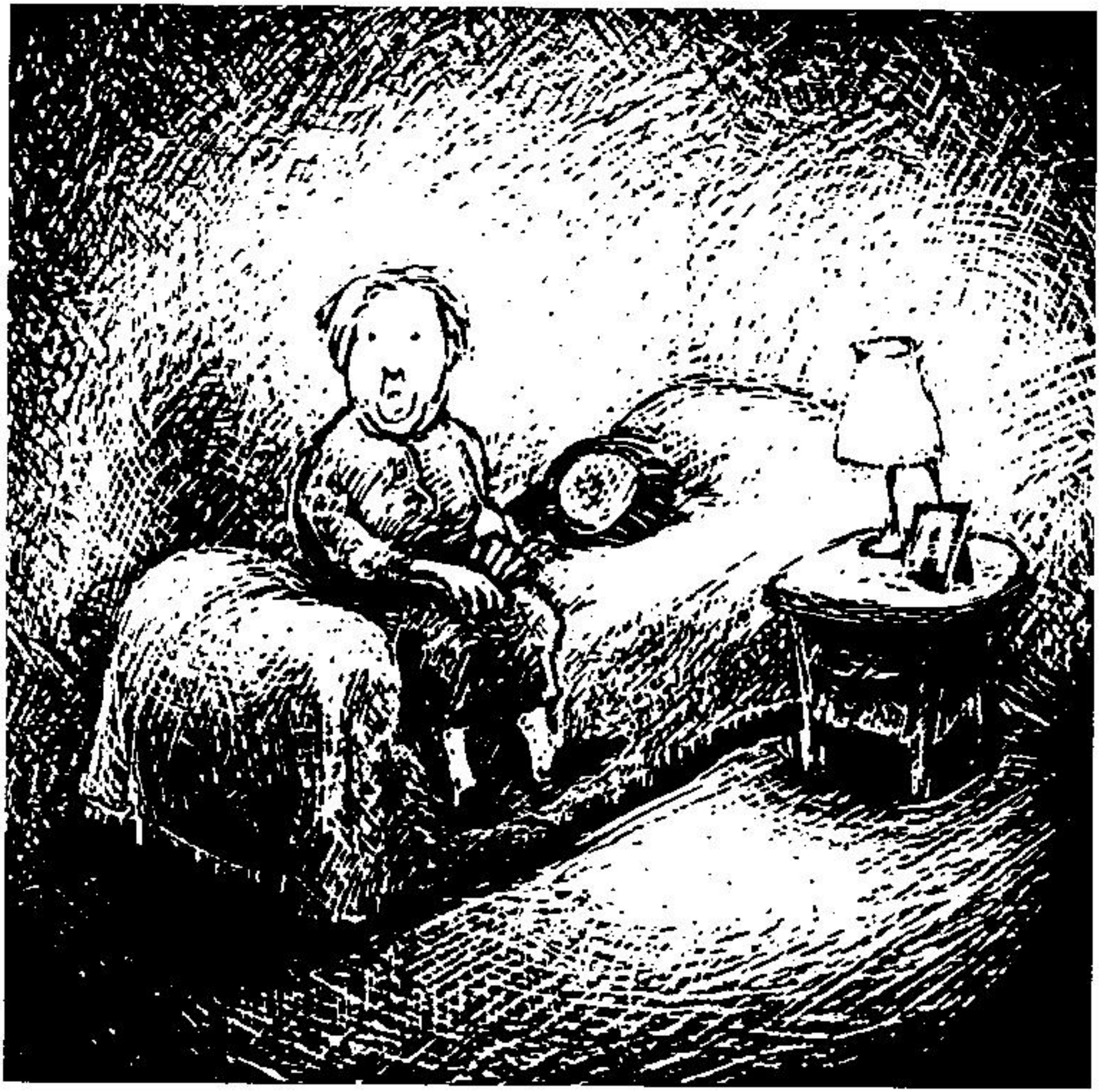
A child asked an elderly lady if she was young or old.
She replied smiling, *"My dear, I have been young a very long time."*

Heard from a grandmother:
"If we had known grand children are so much fun, we'd have had them first."



Art Bindia Thapar

GROUP SEX IN AN OLD WOMEN'S HOME



Life has become a bit lonely since the TV passed away.

Gunna Grähs, Sweden

MEN WOMEN AND WORK



Scientists have just
discovered something
that can do the work of
five men...
... a woman

•

The best man for a job
...may be a woman!

•



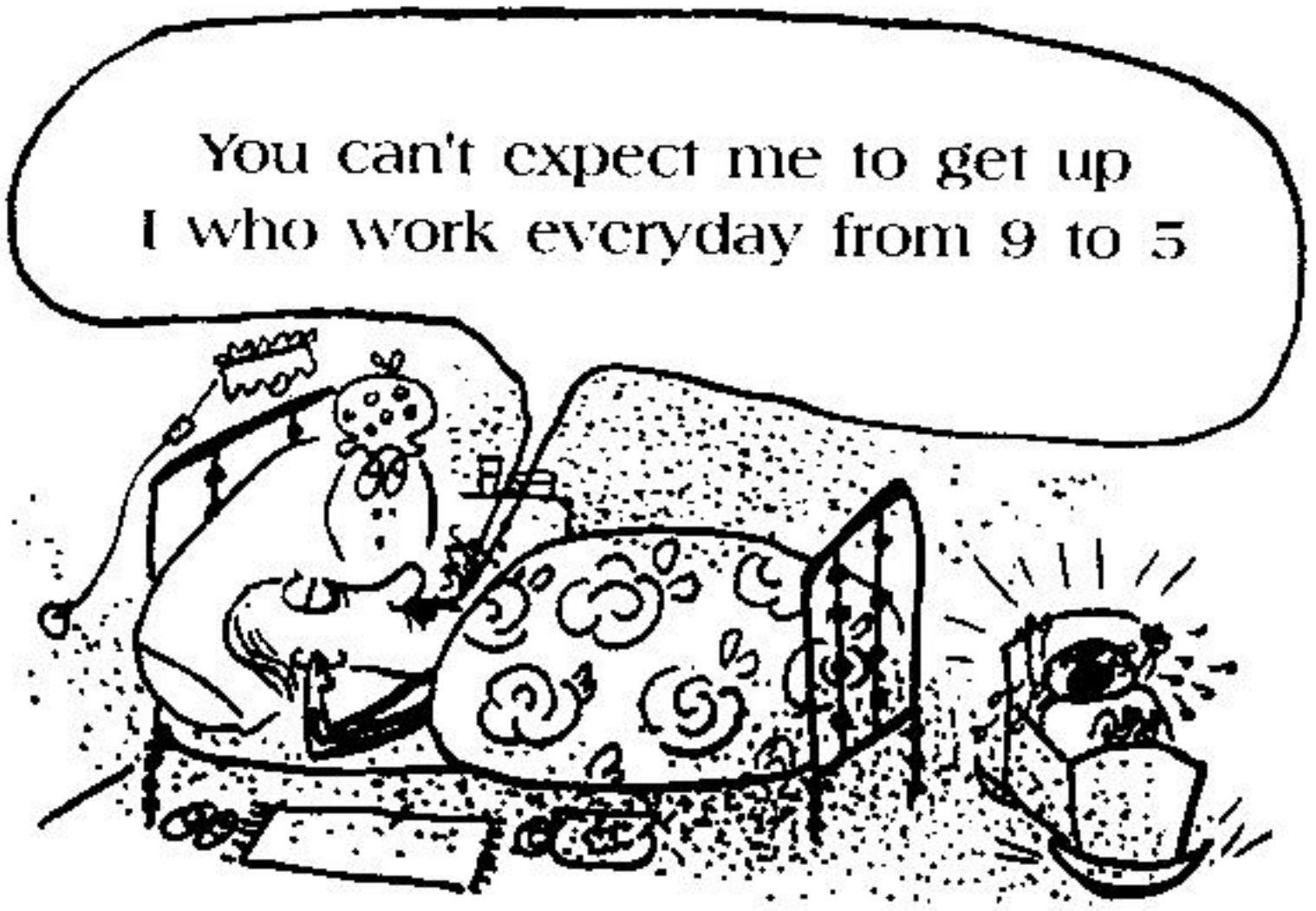
Art Aurat Foundation, Pakistan



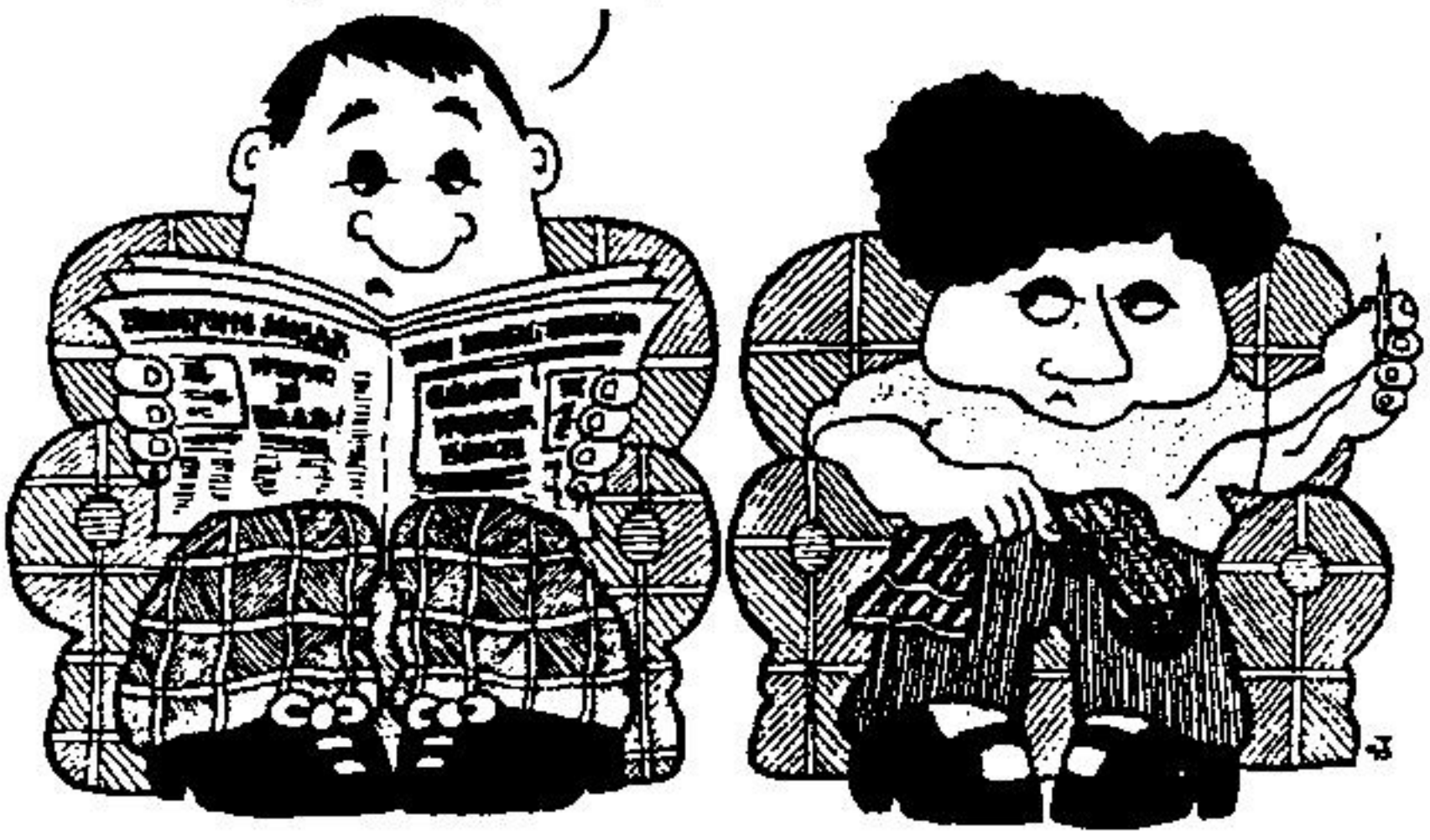
Men At Work



Women work all the time
Men put up signs whenever they work



You should definitely find a job



El Universitatio, Puerto Rico



I am sorry, I am your new Director General



The interviewer asked the woman
who had applied
for a police officer's job,
"Have you ever done anything daring?"

"Yes Sir," she said promptly,
"I was married for five years."

TO PEE
OR
NOT TO PEE

What would get your man to put down the toilet seat?
A sex-change operation!

What do a clitoris, an anniversary, and a toilet have in common?
Men always miss them.

The men who do make it to Heaven
are going to have a rude awakening up there
when they find out two things:
God is a woman...
... and She nailed down all of heaven's
toilet seats!

An Indian man went to Germany for the first time. Soon after leaving the airport, he told his friend who had come to receive him, to stop the car. As soon as the car stopped he got out and started urinating on the road. Alarmed by this act, his friend yelled,
"Oy, the police will come and hold you!"
"Really? Will they do it." he asked
"Yes," said the friend.
"The German Police is amazing," he said in total admiration, "In India we have to hold it ourselves."

Behind every successful man is an exhausted woman.

Behind every great man is a surprised woman.

Before every potentially great woman, there is a man.

God created man before creating woman, because you need a rough draft before you create a masterpiece.

Man says to God, "God, why did you make woman so beautiful, gentle and caring?" God says, "So you would love her." "But God," the man says, "Why did you make her so dumb and stupid?" God replies, "So she would love you."

Walking on the seashore a man found an ancient looking bottle. Intrigued, he picked it up and with great difficulty opened it. And lo and behold, out came a DJINN!!

The Djinn was most grateful to the man for releasing him. "Ask for anything, and I shall grant it," he said.

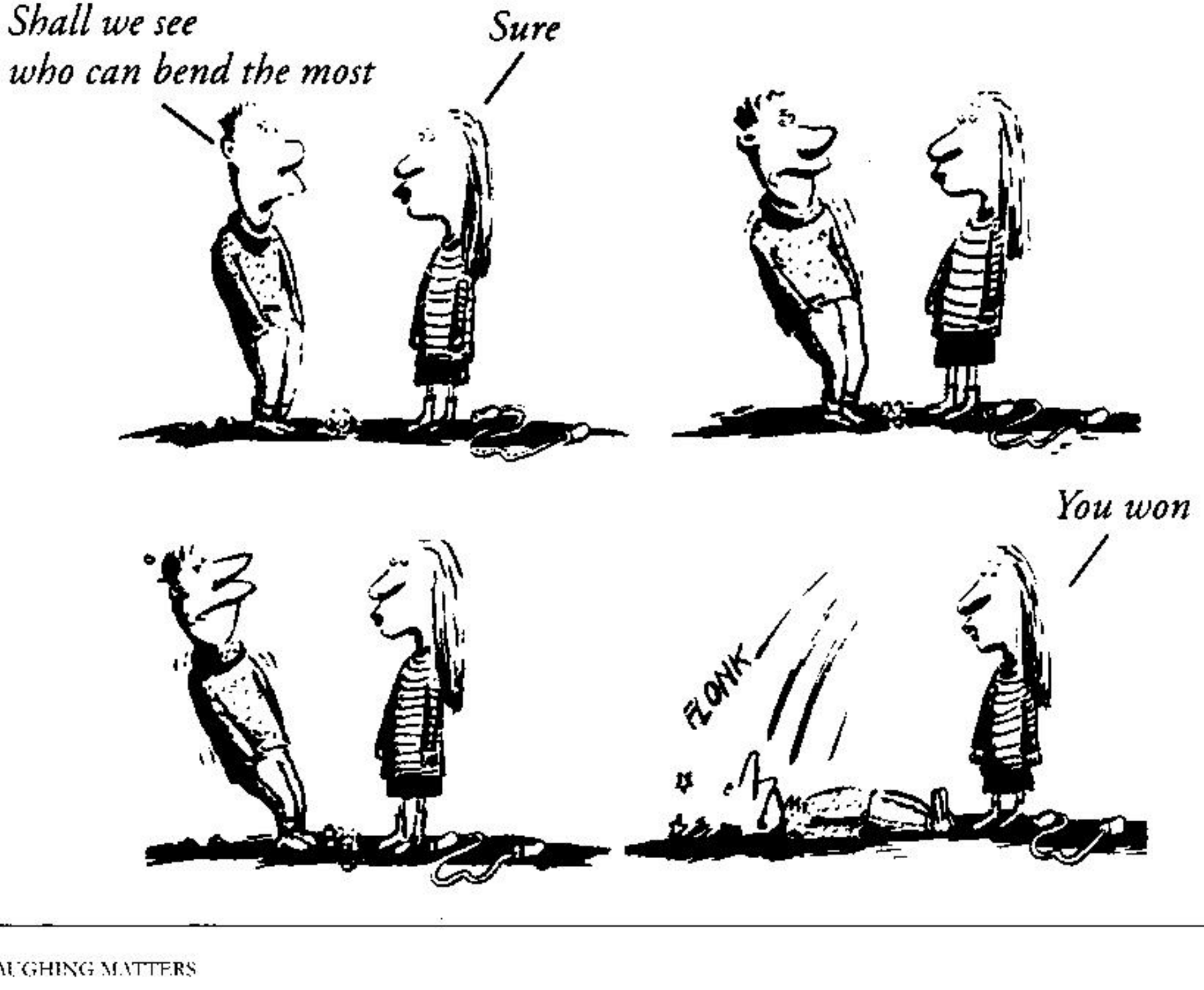
The man seemed to know what he wanted. He said, "Djinn Sahib, please make me 10 times smarter than I am."

"10 times? Are you sure you want to be 10 times smarter?" asked the Djinn. "You may not like what you become."

"I am sure, I am sure" said the man greedily.

The Djinn obliged and the man found he had become a woman.

THE BATTLE OF THE SEXES







All art Bindia Thapar

Give a man a free hand and he'll run it all over you.



Art Bindia Thapar

Oh, that hand? I found it on my thigh one day!



Art Kari Rolfsen, Norway

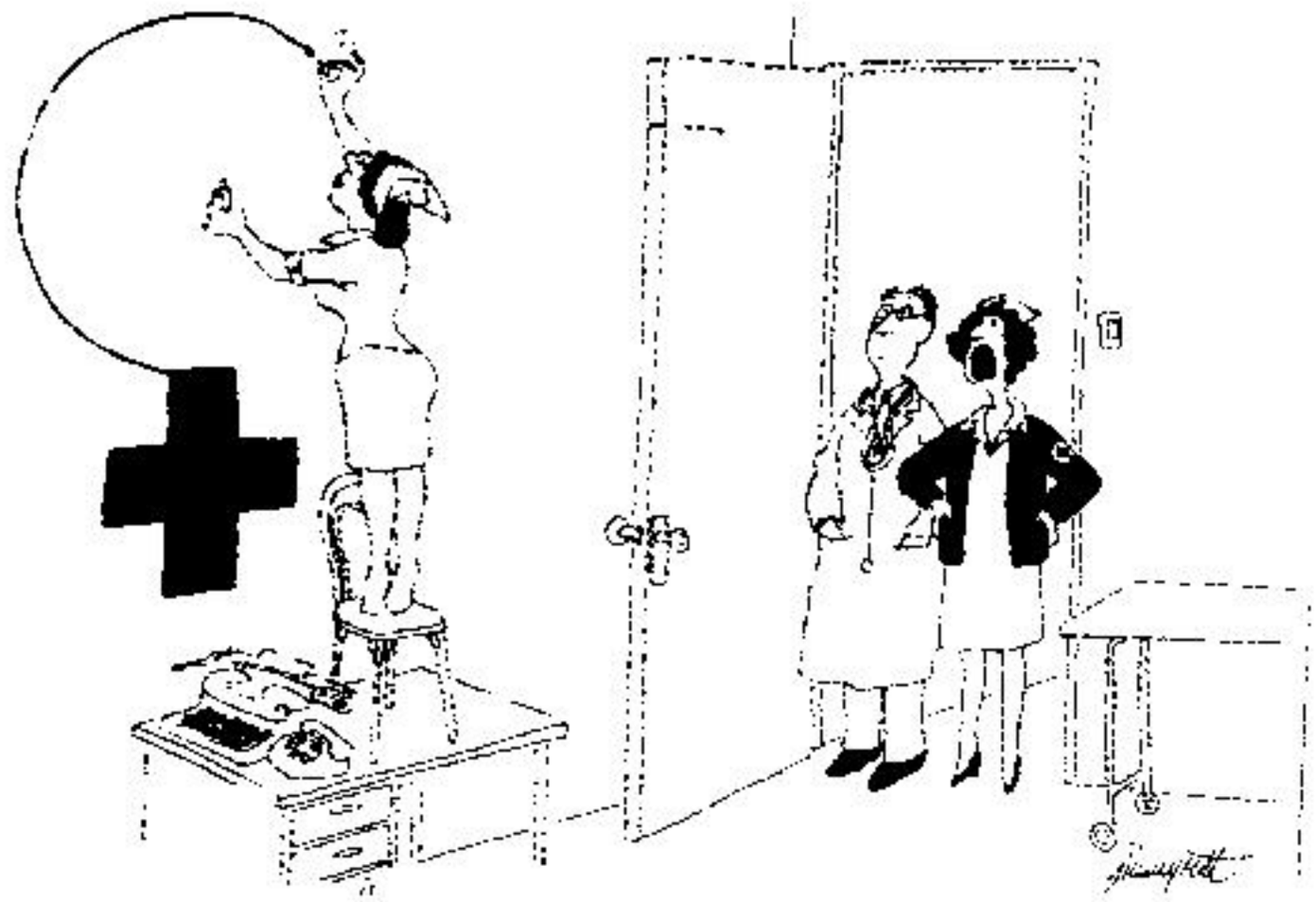
Enough of playing
the mid-wife's role
in the theater of
male production!

We will now
do our own production!!
WATCH OUT!!

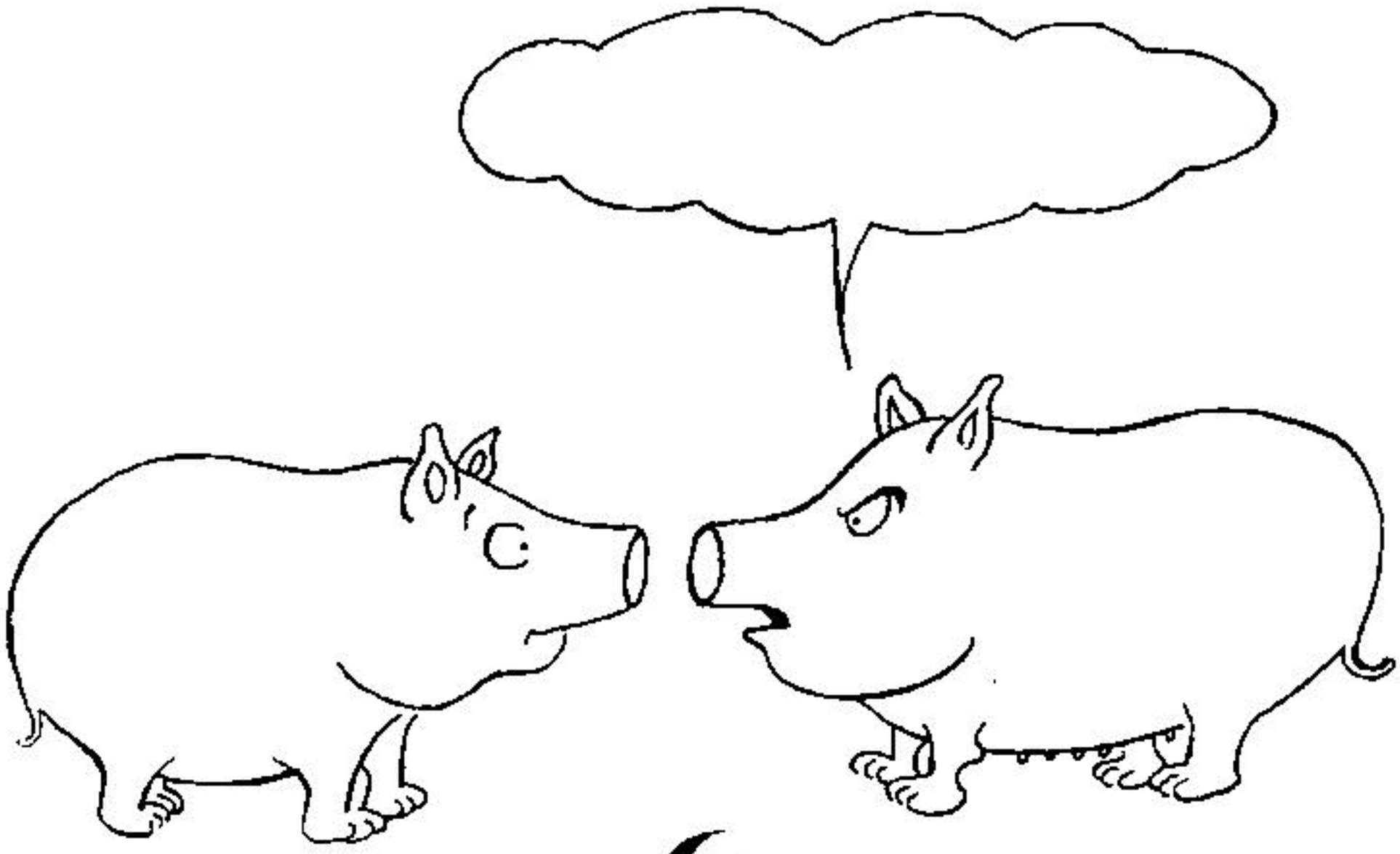
Rukmini Bhaya Nair



Art Bindia Thapar



Jimmy Katt



Sasi

In a forest sanctuary, looking at an open bus full of tourists,
the female tiger says to the male tiger – "Look at that species!
They are very dangerous. They molest and rape
even their own children."

Why are men like popcorn?
They satisfy you, but only for a little while.

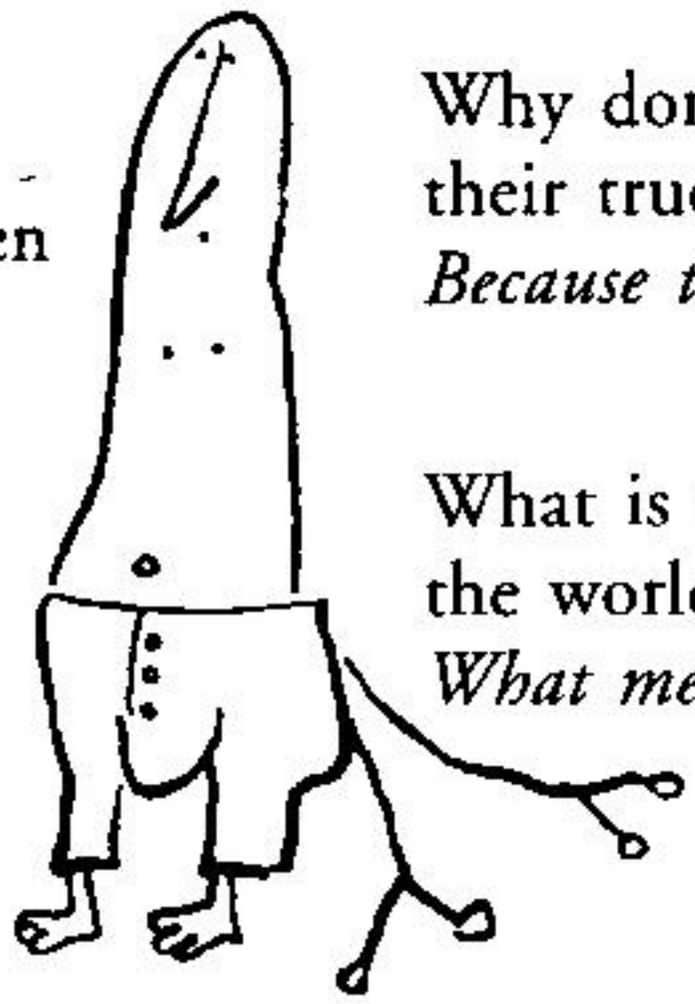
Why are men like commercials?
You can't believe a word they say.

How is a man like the weather?
Nothing can be done to change either one of them.

Why are men like ceramic tiles?
If you lay them right the first time, you can walk over them for life!

What is the difference between a man and Fixed Deposits?
Fixed deposits MATURE!

What do most men think Mutual Orgasm is?
An insurance company.



What is common between a feminist man and an Unidentified Flying Object?
People say they exist but no one has actually seen them!!

What is the difference between men and pigs?
Pigs don't turn into men when they drink.

What do men and women have in common?
They both distrust men.

Why don't men often show their true feelings?
Because they don't have any.

What is the thinnest book in the world?
What men know about women.

Art Helga Henschen, Sweden

The desire of a man for a woman is not directed at her because she is a human being, but because she is a woman. That she is a human being is of no concern to him.

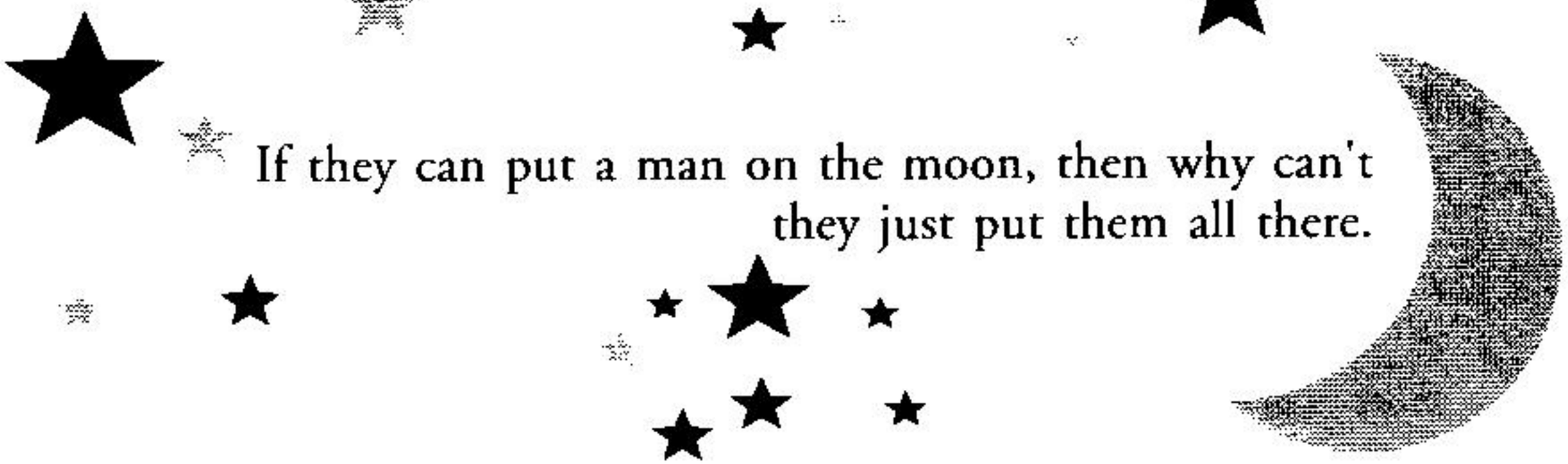
Men would rather pledge allegiance to a flag than to a woman.

They say that men only think about sex. That's not exactly true. They also care a lot about power, world domination, money, and beer.

Most men prefer looks to brains, because most men see better than they think.

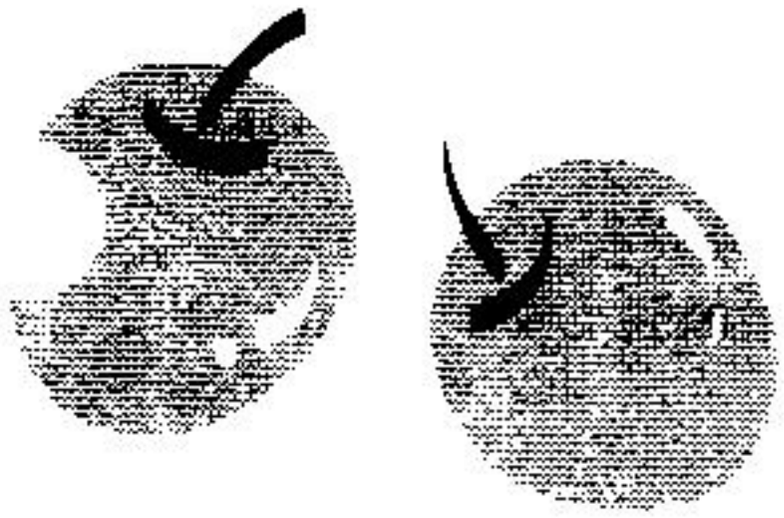
90% of the men give the other 10% a bad name.

An empty man is full of himself.



If they can put a man on the moon, then why can't they just put them all there.

Eve had to be created so that Adam had someone to blame.



IN ALL SYSTEMS OF THEOLOGY THE DEVIL FIGURES AS A MALE PERSON.

For three very strong reasons people believe Jesus Christ was a woman...

He had to produce food at no notice for a large number of people.

The man closest to him betrayed him.

Even after his death he had to get up because there was more work to be done.

There are also three strong reasons to believe Jesus was a South Asian man.

He lived with his Ma and Baba till he was 30.

He thought his mother was a virgin.

His mother believed he was God.

Two idle young men with no
weekend plans walked into a
pharmacy.
One of them spied a box of tampons,
and picked it up.
"Look," he said excitedly, "What an
amazing thing this is. It says on the
packet that you can go swimming
play tennis or ride horses with it!"

Go for younger men.
You might as well...
...they never mature anyway.

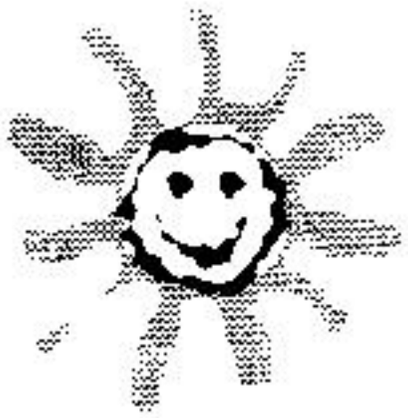
Boys will be boys
and so will a lot of
middle-aged men.

Few women admit their age.
Few men act theirs.

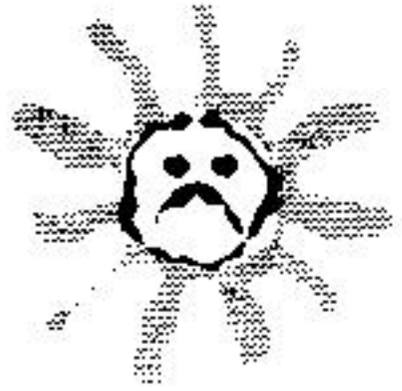
REFLECTIONS

REFLECTIONS





An optimist looks out of the window
every morning and says,
"Good Morning, God!"
A pessimist goes to the window and says,
"Good God, Morning!!"



WHEN FATE SHUTS DOORS, USE WINDOWS

LUCK FAVOURS THE BACKBONE,
NOT THE WISH BONE

WHILE MAKING A LIVING
DON'T FORGET TO LIVE

PLEASE REMEMBER,
IF YOU ARE HEADED IN THE WRONG DIRECTION, GOD ALLOWS U TURNS.



Do you always want to be
right or
do you want to be
happy?

No point
DRINKING
to DROWN
your
SORROWS...
...All
SORROWS
can SWIM

Japan is the Land
of the Rising SUN.
We want our
countries to be the
Lands of Rising
DAUGHTERS

When you INVITE
trouble
It is usually quick to
ACCEPT

No matter how
hard you hug your
money, it never
hugs back.



Instead of
falling in love,
rise in love!!

Success in anything is like riding a bicycle.
Either you keep moving or you fall over



GIVING IS THE KEY TO SUCCESSFUL LIVING

All the joy the world contains has come through wishing happiness for others.

All the misery the world contains has come through wanting pleasure for oneself.



acknowledgements

We would like to thank Eva Warberg, Smitu Kothari, Juhi Jain, our daughters Meeto and Maow, Ritu Menon, Vinay Aditya and the Jagori group for helping put the book together.

We would also like to especially acknowledge all those wonderful feminist sisters whose work has made us laugh and some of which we have included. We have tried to get in touch to get permission from all, but did not succeed in some cases. Since this book is for laughter and not profit, we hope you will consider this an act of solidarity.

And a word at the end

